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Russia of the Russians

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HAULAGE ON THE VOLGA

(From the painting by I. Riepin)

Russia of the Russians

By

Harold Whitmore Williams, Ph.D.

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The slow way wanders to the distant sky,
  The pale sun sinks to his grey dreams of rest;
The shadows fall, and faint the hope that I
  May win the goal beyond the fading west.

But from the greyness light rose, and sweet sound
  Called me to linger on the endless plain;
Summoned swift powers from unseen heights around,
  Breathed forth a home, made lone ways live again.

Sighs mount to song, light in the shadow lies,
And the wild plain is mated with the skies.

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RUSSIA OF THE RUSSIANS

CHAPTER I

THE GROWTH OF RUSSIA

THE fundamental difference between Russian and English history is the difference between the great plain and the island. English history tells of the upbuilding by an island people of the greatest maritime empire in the world. Russian history tells how a people whose original home lay between the slopes of the Carpathians and the Dnieper gradually, with toil, pain and effort, secured possession of the greatest plain in the world and so created the broadest of land empires. There are curious analogies, striking points of resemblance in the process of empire-building in both countries. But the fundamental difference between the island and the plain, between a sea and a land empire makes itself constantly felt, and largely accounts for striking differences between the two nations in character, social structure and political development.

Russia in the Making.

The island constitutes a secure physical basis for national effort. It guarantees seclusion and privacy. It renders intercourse with the outside world dependent far less on the will of outsiders than on the islanders themselves. The island nation is largely protected against outside interference. It is in a much better position than continental nations to concentrate its energies on questions of internal development. Its social structure is compact and highly organised. Imperial expansion beyond the seas does not alter the essential characteristics of the structure, it only throws them into greater relief. In thinking of the British Empire one thinks primarily and mainly of England. In considering the Russian Empire

one's thoughts range over a wide geographical area, and do not readily concentrate on a given point. British expansion is a radiation, while Russian expansion is a gradual diffusion, And while the position of England on an island base has made it possible to maintain a fairly constant equilibrium between social development and internal expansion, Russian social development has been perpetually subordinated, most frequently sacrificed to the inexorable necessity of extending the political frontier further and further until the natural barriers of sea and mountain were reached. Thus, though the history of Russian political evolution runs almost parallel with that of the British Empire, England has enjoyed a large measure of political liberty for centuries, while Russia is only now making her first experiments in constitutional government, and Russian backwardness in the matter of political institutions and social initiative is largely to be accounted for by the position of the Russian people on the great plain.

The plain that constitutes the arena of Russian historical effort, extends from the Baltic and the Prussian and Austrian frontiers across Eastern Europe and Western Asia in one vast sweep, broken only by the low range of the Urals. It is bounded on the North by the White Sea and the Arctic Ocean, on the South by the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Kopet Dagh range on the Persian frontier, and on the East reaches a limit in the Pamirs, the Tian-Shan and Altai ranges and the mountainous region beyond the Yenisei. The plain is not absolutely level. There are hills, undulations, stretches of broken country. A map indicating altitude above sea-level displays in different regions of Russia various shades, but these shades will all be of the same colour. No point in the plain has an altitude of more than 1,400 feet. The Russian landscape gives the impression of boundless space; it constantly beckons, as the sea does, to far horizons, only that the soil again and again tempts to linger, to settle and to build. The spirit that sent Vikings and Englishmen roving across the green expanse of the sea has caused scores of peoples

to go wandering over the plain. But in the end they turned their tents into huts; they naturally inclined to settle along the great avenues of communication, on the banks of the rivers that thread their way through swamp, forest and steppe to the limiting seas.

Three River Highways.

There are in European Russia three great highway-rivers, the Volga, the Dnieper and the Western Dvina. They take their rise in the marshy region of Central Russia to the North-West of Moscow, and flow long slow versts across the plain, the first to the Caspian, the second to the Black Sea, and the third to the Baltic. The course of these rivers indicates the chief lines of human intercourse, those great trade routes that give the principal stimulus to social development and to the organisation and growth of political communities on the plain. The limitless expanse is a constant appeal to go on somewhither, it awakens a spirit of restless adventure. But it is the rivers that tell whither to go and why, and the rivers that take their winding course across European Russia constitute a highway between North-Western Europe and the Caspian and the Middle East, and again between North-Western Europe and the Black Sea basin and Constantinople, that is to say, the Near East. There are no high watersheds between the rivers. Frequently two basins are separated by only a few miles of gently undulating country, and boats can easily be conveyed from one to the other overland. These great waterways are thus open roads across the Continent, and those who live along the banks of the rivers necessarily become intermediaries between East and West.

In winter the rivers are frozen hard, and the plain in all its vast extent from Odessa to Archangel, and from the Pamirs to the Baltic, is covered with a sheet of snow. Winter does not paralyse human effort on the plain, but circumscribes it, concentrates it within definite limits. Summer is the time of roving, for active intercourse with the wide world, in the form of trading or military expeditions. Winter encourages

settlement, the accumulation of the products of the summer's toil, indoor life, home industries, communal organisation, the growth of villages and towns. Winter is the period of repose for nature and men, and it is the repose of winter that makes the activity of the summer possible. Then the long winter has a profound effect on character. It causes a relaxation of effort, leads to apathy and inertness, and in any case necessitates a complete change of occupation. To till the soil is out of the question while the snow lies on the ground. The place of agriculture is taken by forestry, by hunting, or by home industries. The melting in spring of the snows that cover the greater part of two continents fertilises the soil, fills the rivers to overflowing with water, and provokes a sudden exuberant uprush of vegetation. Agriculture and commerce on the plain are dependent on the sharp contrast between winter and summer.

It is this natural environment—so different from the snug compactness of an island with an even temperate climate—that determines the main lines of Russian historical development. The thousand odd years of Russian history show how a people living on the South-West corner of the plain learned the plain's secret, discovered its rhythm, its steady alternation between relaxation and effort, between movement and repose, gradually secured possession of the overland trade-routes and step by step transforming commercial advantage into political power, finally subdued all its rivals and created an Empire whose limits are nearly everywhere coterminous with those of the plain, while in the Caucasus and Siberia they overpass them.

Early History.

For several centuries before the beginnings of Russian history, the Southern Steppes of Russia were occupied by Scythians and Sarmatians, of the life and habits of the former of whom Herodotus has left a vivid account. Greek colonies occupied various points along the shores of the Black Sea, and excavations on the sites of these colonies have yielded

rich treasure, a large proportion of which now adorns Russian museums, and serves to show how strongly beat the pulse of Greek civilisation even in the Euxine region on the confines of the kingdoms of the barbarians. The Sarmatians were probably of Iranian stock, and a remnant of their descendants is to be found in the Ossetines in the Northern Caucasus. Who the Scythians were is not very clear. Perhaps they were in the main Iranian, and perhaps there were Slav tribes among those whom the Greek writers included under the general designation. That Slavs and Iranians were at one time in close contact is clear from linguistic evidence. The centre of the original home of the Slavs was in the marshy basin of the Pripet in the south of the present Government of Minsk, and probably the White Russians who inhabit Minsk and the neighbouring Governments more nearly represent the original Slavonic type than any other people. To the north of the Scythians in the forest region bordering on the steppe were Finnish tribes—the Western Finns, whose modern representatives are the natives of Finland and Esthonia, being gradually driven northward by the movements of Germanic and Slavonic peoples. The Goths came down from the north before the Christian era, occupied for a time the basin of the Vistula, moved southward to the Danube and in the third century A.D. held sway in the West of the steppes.

Russian history begins with the creation in the ninth century of the State of Kiev. Up till then the Slav tribes settled along the upper reaches of the Dnieper and its tributaries, and along the banks of other rivers as far north as Lake Ilmen had not reached the stage of organised political life, although here and there they seem to have erected forts and even towns. Their position on the trade route between the Baltic and the Black Sea gave them certain advantages as intermediaries, but also exposed them to attack. In the ninth century about the time when King Alfred was engaged in his struggle with

Kiev.

the Danes, Germanic freebooters known as Variags or Varengers, captured the Slav town of Kiev. It is not absolutely certain who these Variags were. They may possibly have been Gothic pirates from settlements on the Black Sea coast —remnants of the Gothic State in the Southern steppes which had been broken up by the Hunns. But it is more probable that the invaders were Northmen who had penetrated into the interior from the Baltic by way of the Neva, Lake Ladoga, the river Volkhovo, Novgorod, Lake Ilmen and the rivers leading thence to the tributaries of the Dnieper. These bands of adventurers led, as the annals say, by a chief named Rurik, subjugated the dwellers along the river banks, and seizing Kiev, which owing to its position at the confluence of several rivers, was an important trading and political centre, made the first attempt to weld these scattered Slav tribes into a political whole. The Variags, or as they were also called, Rus or Russians, made plundering excursions across the Eastern steppes by way of the kingdom of the Khazars—a Turkish people whose rulers had adopted Judaism—to the Caspian and to Northern Persia, and also down the Dnieper and across the Black Sea to the very walls of Constantinople. The rule of the Variags was hard, but it benefited the Slavs. It established order, promoted trade, and provided protection against the attacks of the nomad hordes who were constantly making their way from Asia into the rich pastures of the steppes. And the Variags very soon ceased to be foreigners and became Slavs in speech and habits. The early rulers of the Kiev state, Rurik's successors, the Princes Oleg, Igor and Sviatoslav and the Princess Olga, made the neighbouring Slav tribes groan by their forcible extortion of tribute, but at the same time Olga, for instance, defended Kiev against the Khazars and Sviatoslav and his successors against another Turkish people called the Pechenegs, known in Byzantine history as Patzinaks, while during the eleventh and twelfth centuries the energies of the princes of Kiev were engaged in warding off the attacks of the Torks and Polovians. also

H.I.M. NICHOLAS II

(In the uniform of an English Admiral

Turkish peoples, a section of whom finally settled in central Hungary.

Christianity was adopted in 988 as the State religion by Prince Vladimir, the son of Sviatoslav. The missionaries came from Constantinople with which the Russians had for a considerable time previously maintained commercial and political relations. Russian marauders had more than once ravaged the precincts of the Great City. Uncouth Russian envoys had frequently stood side by side with the envoys of other barbarian peoples of the steppes, with Khazars and Pechenegs, shy and overawed amidst the dazzling splendours of the Imperial Court. Princess Olga had visited the city during the reign of Constantine Porphyrogenitos, and had concluded with the Greeks commercial treaties. Sviatoslav, Vladimir's father, had at the instigation of the Greeks, invaded Bulgaria at the head of an army of 60,000 men, and had crossed the Balkans into Thrace. But the Greeks turned against him, and he was in the end defeated by the Emperor John Tzimiskes on the Danube. The city constantly attracted the Russians; they coveted it, and the Balkan question, the question of the watch and ward over the straits on which Constantinople stands, the straits that lead out into the Mediterranean and the wide world beyond, has been vital for Russia from the very earliest period of her history.

Christianity Adopted.

The step taken by Vladimir in adopting Christianity as the State religion had consequences of immense importance. Byzantine culture had a powerful rival in that Perso-Arabic civilisation, which had its centre at Bagdad, and held sway over Mesopotamia and the Middle East. The Arabs took a considerable share in the trade of the great plain, and in this way maintained intercourse with the Russians. It is not improbable, that, as a legend indicates, Vladimir may have weighed in his mind the possibility of adopting Islam as a symbol of civilisation and political progress, just as the rulers of the Khazars from similar motives had adopted Judaism.

But Vladimir chose Christianity, and so set his face westward and linked the fortunes of the Russian State with those great forces and tendencies which have produced modern civilisation.

The adoption of Christianity was of great immediate importance for the Russian State. It strengthened the monarchical principle and led to the introduction of Byzantine book-learning and Byzantine administrative methods. Vladimir was an ardent promoter of learning and the arts, he succeeded in throwing a poetical glamour over the conception of the state, and in the hold he gained on the popular imagination—the folk-songs are full of the praise of Vladimir, the "Bright Sun"—he may very well be compared with Alfred.

But the new social and political ideas introduced from Byzantium were subjected to severe stress and strain, were scattered by violent winds of misfortune across the plain, and took centuries to mature and to become embodied in a powerful State. The territory inhabited by those Slav tribes who acknowledged more or less effectively the sovereign rights of Vladimir and his descendants, extended over the northern fringe of the steppe region as far as the Western Bug and the Dnieper on the West; and on the East as far as the upper reaches of the Don. To the north, in the forest region, it extended beyond Lake Ladoga, and here again on the west it was bounded by an irregular line running from about where Dorpat now stands to the neighbourhood of Vilna, and on the east it extended as far as Nizhni-Novgorod at the junction of the Oka and the Volga. But nominal extent of territory was by no means coincident with extent of power. Rivalries between various regions and princes weakened the central authority, and the practice of dividing up territory among members of the princely house of Rurik led to constant bickering and feuds. Custom had established that the senior member of the family should occupy the throne of Kiev, the other principalities going to the other

members of the house of Rurik in order of age. But the senior might be passed over in favour of the ablest, and in an age when firmness of will and strength of arm were the first requisites in a ruler, might very easily supplanted complicated and cumbrous right and made confusion worse confounded. The various appanages of the descendants of Vladimir became small and practically independent principalities, and the strength of the "Russian Land" was frittered away in petty dynastic conflicts. It became increasingly difficult to offer an effective resistance to the incursions of the nomads who occupied the Southern and Eastern steppes. The political power of Kiev steadily declined. Novgorod and Pskov in the north were practically independent merchant republics. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Galicio-Volhynian principality in the west displayed a tendency to assume the power that Kiev was letting fall from her hands. The constant pressure of the nomads on the fringe of the steppe region stimulated a colonising movement to the North-East, to the region between the Volga and the Oka, where the Slavs mingled with the Finns, forming a new type known as the Great Russian. The princes of this region grew more powerful in proportion as the prestige of Kiev declined, and when Kiev fell the strongest ruler of the North-East, the Grand Prince of Vladimir on the Kliazma, became the overlord of the Russian princes.

The Kiev period, which lasted from the end of the ninth to the beginning of the thirteenth century, may be regarded as a preliminary survey of the field of Russian historical effort, a kind of feeling of the ground, the drafting of a rough sketch or plan. It was a period of happy guesses, of brilliant suggestions. The spirit of the plain was in it, the spirit of expansion and heroic adventure. For the Russian of the Kiev period the world was wide and full of wonder, and the tasks it presented were of fascinating variety. The political and social system was ill organised and loosely developed. In the towns the merchant class was dominant, the Prince

and his personal followers, his band or druzhina, maintained order, and only gradually transformed their military energy into political power. The clan system prevailed, the blood-feud was common, slavery existed but in a comparatively mild form. Popular assemblies in which the heads of the clans took part largely controlled the administration.

But within this loose and primitive social and political organisation the elements of a higher order were actively present. Christianity not only reformed manners and promoted learning, it brought with it from Byzantium legislative and administrative conceptions which became powerful motive forces in Russian history. By asserting the principle of the sanctity of monarchical authority it greatly increased the prestige and the power of the princes. And by marking off the Russians from their neighbours as a distinctly Christian people it strengthened and deepened national feeling. The Orthodox Christianity of Byzantium assumed under Yaroslav, the son of Vladimir, a specifically Russian character. Christian doctrine, Christian tradition were not merely translated from Greek into Slavonic, they became the predominant, the vital and the distinctive elements in a rich world of popular belief. But they were modified in the process, they became Russian. Christian sentiment reinforced national sentiment. To be a Russian meant to be a Christian, and the struggle for national existence against pagan or Mohammedan neighbours received a religious sanction. Christianity was an important element in that conception of the fundamental unity of the different sections of the Russian people, which steadily grew and developed in spite of fierce attacks from without, and even more dangerous internecine strife. This sense of national unity, powerful as it was in the Kiev Period, did not then avail to establish an effective and unitary political organisation. It bore its fruits only in the Moscow Period.

In the Kiev Period, too, the Russians realised something of the extent of the world in which they were to play their part. They maintained constant intercourse with Byzantium,

which was a meeting-place for representatives of all parts of the civilised world. The most westerly of the Russian principalities of this period, Galich, at one time extended as far as the mouth of the Danube and, its chief connections were with a semi-barbarous Hungary and with the Slav states of Bohemia and Poland on the north and north-west. Yaroslav the Great, the son of Vladimir, in whose reign the Kiev state reached the zenith of its power, married a Swedish princess and Scandinavians were prominent at his court. His sister was married to Casimir, King of Poland, one of his daughters to Henry I of France, and another to King Andrew of Hungary, and there is also mention of a connection by marriage between Yaroslav and English princes. On the west the Russians had to deal with Lithuanians, on the north and north-east with Finnish tribes, and in the south and south-east with nomads of Turkish race. From the latter the Russians borrowed many customs and shared with them certain traits such as a passionate love of the steppes. Vladimir is frequently spoken of in song and story as a Kogan or Khagan, which is the distinctive title of Turkish ruling princes from the Black Sea to the Mongolian frontier of China. The roving warriors or *bogatyrs* of the Russian epos bear in many respects a striking resemblance to the typical nomad warrior, and the name itself comes from the Persian *bahadur* through Turkish. Farther to the east, beyond the steppes and the Caspian, there was the wealthy and prosperous sphere of Persian civilisation, with which the Russians maintained trading relations through the Bulgarians of the Volga and the peoples of the steppes. The unknown author of the great heroic poem, "The Story of Igor's Band," a moving account of the expedition of a Russian prince against the Polovians—the only fragment of secular literature that has been handed down from the Kiev Period—was probably the contemporary of such Persian poets as Khakani and Nizami. In the Caucasus there was the picturesque kingdom of Georgia, which in the twelfth century

attained brilliance and power. Towards the close of the Kiev Period Byzantium still retained its hold on the southern coast of the Black Sea, but Turkish nomads wandered across the uplands of Asia Minor, and the Seljuks had founded in the eleventh century that state of Konia or Ikonium which was later to serve as a base for the Ottoman advance. In the north-west of the Russian territory Novgorod and Pskov maintained active intercourse with the rising cities of Northern Germany. It was indeed a rich and varied world with which the Russians of the Kiev Period were at various points brought into contact, the world of the early middle ages with a flourishing Islam, a slowly expiring Byzantium, and a Europe just coming into being.

The Tartars.

In 1238, 1239, and 1240 the North-Eastern and Southern Russian principalities were overrun by an army of Tartars or Turks under Mongol leadership. The impact of this invasion was far more terrible than that of the incursions of Turkish nomads —Khazars, Pecheniegs and Polovians—from which the Russians had suffered for centuries. The Tartars formed part of the host organised in Central Asia by Chingiz Khan, who had discovered in carefully planned and rapidly multiplied nomad raids a secret of world-wide conquest. After having devastated the greater part of Russian territory and ravaged Poland, Hungary, Bosnia and Dalmatia, the Tartar armies, known under the general name of the Golden Horde, settled in the South-Eastern steppes, and their leader Baty, the grandson of Chingiz, built a capital at Sarai on the Volga, some distance to the north of the present Astrakhan, whence he exercised rule over the dominions allotted to him, Khiva, the Urals, the Crimea and the Russian principalities. The rule of the Tartar Khans over Russia took the form of the exaction of tribute, which was either collected by special tax-gatherers called baskaks, usually in a very brutal and rough-and-ready fashion, or else brought by the princes in person to the Horde. The Khans skilfully took advantage

of dissensions among the Russian princes in order to consolidate their own power in Russia, and on the other hand rival Russian princes constantly sought to secure their ends by intriguing at the Khan's court. Several princes were cruelly murdered in the Horde, and Yaroslav II, who was Grand Prince of Vladimir at the time of the Tartar invasion, was poisoned on his return journey from Karakorum, the capital of the Great Khan in Mongolia. The Khans interfered little, however, in the details of the administration of Russian principalities, and there was a great deal of peaceful intercourse between Tartars and Russians. Sarai was an important commercial centre, owing to its position on the chief caravan route between Russia and India. There was a considerable colony of Russian traders in the city. Christianity was tolerated, and occasionally members of the Khan's family professed Christianity, although the bulk of the Tartars nominally abandoned Shamanism for Islam shortly after their settlement in the steppe. The Tartars passed on to the Russians many elements of Chinese and Persian culture and certain Oriental administrative conceptions. The Russian vocabulary contains a considerable number of words borrowed from the Tartar language, and many of these were borrowed by the Tartars in their turn from Chinese, Persian or Arabic. It was as a result of Tartar influence that the domestic life of the Russian well-to-do classes assumed that predominantly Oriental character which was so marked a feature of the Moscow Period. On the whole, in spite of the brutality and ferocity frequently displayed by the Tartar Khans and their tax-gatherers, and in spite of the fact that the effect of the invasion was to transfer the political centre of Russia to a region remote from the civilisation of the South and the West, Tartar rule did contribute in many ways to the enrichment of Russian civilisation. Negatively the Tartar yoke provided a most effective stimulus to Russian political development. Just as the raids of the sea-rovers, the Danes, led to the creation

of a United England, so the invasion of those land-rovers, the Tartars, set in motion the forces which gradually brought about the political union of the scattered forces of the Russian people.

After the fall of Kiev in 1240, the greater part of the South Russian territory passed under the direct rule of the Tartars. In the West, the Principality of Galicia and Volhynia served for a time as the rallying ground for the remnants of Southern Russian power, until towards the end of the fourteenth century Galicia was incorporated in Poland, and Volhynia was annexed to Lithuania. Most of the other Eastern and South-Western Russian principalities were absorbed in that Lithuanian State which had grown strong through perpetual conflict with the Teutonic order in East Prussia on the one hand, and on the other through the subjection of petty Russian princes, weakened by endless dynastic strife. In the long run the Lithuanian elements in the Lithuanian State were completely overshadowed by the Russian, constituting about nine-tenths of the population and territory, and the union of this predominantly Russian and Orthodox State with Roman Catholic Poland through the marriage of its Grand Prince Jagailo with Jadwiga, the Queen of Poland, in 1386, proved to be a source of constant internal dissension, and a perpetual occasion of conflict with the growing Russian power in the North-East. It was in the North-East, in that region between the Oka and the Volga, where Russian colonists mingling with Finnish natives had founded new homes amidst the forests that the promise implied in the Kiev state again took its slow and toilsome way towards fulfilment. The practice of constant subdivision into appanages was in force here as it was throughout the whole of the territory reigned over by princes of the House of Rurik, and also—though counteracted to a greater extent by centralising tendencies—in the neighbouring States of Lithuania and Poland. Among the petty princes of the region, those of Vladimir on the Kliazma, a tributary of the Oka, gained the ascendancy. In 1169

Andrei Bogoliubski, Prince of Vladimir, assumed the title of Grand Prince, thereby asserting against the rulers of Kiev his claim to the headship over all the Russian land. But the headship of the Vladimir Princes was for a long time merely nominal. Their real authority extended little beyond the principalities in their immediate neighbourhood, Riazan and Murom. Their attempts to control the affairs of the South Russian principalities or those of Novgorod and Pskov were rarely successful. Livonian knights and Lithuanians had much more influence in the West of Russia, and Poles, Lithuanians and Hungarians in the enfeebled South, than did the Princes of Vladimir during the twelfth century. Vladimir must have been an important trading centre, lying as it does between the Oka and the Volga. In grave mounds in the region have been found coins pointing to intercourse with the distant East and the distant West, coins of Arab Caliphs and Bukharan Samanids dating from 772 to 984, and Anglo-Saxon coins and coins of the German Empire dating from 950 to 1090. From the twelfth to the fourteenth century, Vladimir, with the neighbouring principalities of Rostov and Suzdal, was a home of refuge for that slowly developing Russian culture which in other parts of the Russian land was exposed to a constant irruption of alien influences. Some of the best monuments of Russian ecclesiastical architecture are to be found in the Vladimir-Suzdal country, and here the Russian spirit ripened and gathered strength in undistinguished obscurity.

Vladimir.

It was after the Tartar invasion, in the course of which Vladimir was sacked like many other Russian towns, that the title of Grand Prince of Vladimir came to connote a real authority over the whole of the North and North-East of Russia. But this was because the Grand Prince became the deputy of the Khan, and was responsible before him for the collection of tribute from the other princes. He was the chief vassal, and his power was a derivative power. But it was none

the less real, and was much more effective as a means of asserting headship than the earlier attempts of the Vladimir rulers to enforce their shadowy claims. And for this reason the title was an object of perpetual intrigue in the Horde on the part of rival princes. Tartar rule served as a mould for Russian unity. It counteracted the perpetual tendency to dismemberment induced by the practice of dividing and subdividing appanages until the very principle of authority went astray in fragmentary baronies in the forests.

The process of reunion was hastened by the rapid economic growth of the principality of Moscow, an appanage of Vladimir, which was formed in the thirteenth century, and by reason of the fertility of its soil and its advantageous position on the trade routes between the Volga and the Western Dvina and Novgorod and Riazan attracted a large population from the neighbouring principalities. Moscow proved much better adapted than Vladimir to be the economic centre of the North-East, and it was mainly for this reason that the political supremacy gradually passed into its hands. The princes of Moscow gradually increased their territory by carefully calculated purchase and conquest, and a particularly shrewd and enterprising ruler, Ivan Kalita, secured in 1328 from the Khan by the customary methods of intrigue and the murder of rivals the title of Grand Prince, which thereafter was a permanent attribute of the rulers of Moscow. Ivan Kalita, as his nickname "Moneybags" indicates, was a careful householder, and his will with its precise enumeration of the golden dishes in his possession is more like that of a country squire than a monarch. He built churches in Moscow, transferred the Metropolitan of Vladimir to his capital, established order in his dominions, intrigued right and left, added field to field and town to town, used the troops of the Khan against his neighbours and kinsmen, and altogether prospered ingloriously, but in a way that surely tended to the centralisation of political power in Moscow. His

successors followed in his footsteps, and the chief characteristic of the rulers of Moscow down to the time of Ivan the Terrible, and even after his day, was a sober thriftiness, crafty forethought, a minute choice of ways and means and an unwillingness to undertake any risks. They were cautious business men. They increased their territory by purchase, by gradually modifying the laws of inheritance so as to prevent the dissipation of territory in appanages, by setting their neighbours quarrelling amongst themselves, by fomenting civil strife in other principalities, and by going out to conquest when conquest was sure. Very striking is the contrast between this policy and the generous and reckless expansiveness of the Kiev Period, the spirit which later became embodied in the Cossacks. If the Kiev policy was that of the open steppe, the Moscow policy was that of the forest region, where an enemy may be lurking behind every tree. Both tendencies, that of the *bogatyr* or roving hero, and that of the *diak* or intriguing and calculating Government clerk, have continually played and still play their part in the development of the Russian nation and the Russian character.

While Moscow grew stronger, the power of the Golden Horde steadily declined. Internal dissensions and conflicts with Central Asian States undermined the authority of the Khans. But the Tartars for a long time remained capable of doing a considerable amount of harm. In the period from the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century the Khans made seven destructive raids on Russian territory. One Khan, Mamai, was defeated at Kulikovo, on the Don, in 1380, by Prince Dmitri Donskoi, who displayed a personal courage not usual among the Moscow rulers. Tokhtamysh sacked the Kremlin, the great Tamerlane himself devasted Riazan, and both the Khans Yedigei, and Ulu Mahmed fell upon Moscow. But in spite of these marauding expeditions the authority of the Khans became a negligible quantity for the Moscow Princes, and Ivan III found it in 1480 a simple

matter to throw off that Tartar yoke to which the Russian people had been subject for 240 years.

Ivan III attained remarkable success in pursuing the aim of his dynasty to reunite the Russian people under the rule of Moscow. First of all he destroyed the independence of the proud merchant republic of Novgorod. Taking advantage of the fact that the people of Novgorod dreading the growing power of Moscow, had invited a Lithuanian prince to occupy the traditional position of nominal ruler in the city Ivan sent a force against the Novgorodians, who were left in the lurch by the Lithuanians to whom they had appealed, and defeated on the river Shelon near Lake Ilmen. Then Ivan gradually reduced the privileges of the republic, and appearing before the city with a strong army, enforced from it absolute submission. He abolished the system of government by popular vote and by wholesale execution of the leading citizens, and the transference of a large number of Novgorod families to Moscow territory, he precluded a revival of autonomous tendencies, and so closed one of the most picturesque pages in Russian history. Situated on the river Volkhovo, at the point where it flows out of Lake Ilmen on its way to Lake Ladoga, the Neva and the Baltic, Novgorod held the key of the trade between the interior of Russia and the Germanic countries of the North, it commanded the chief overland route between the Baltic and the Black Sea. It was constantly visited by foreign traders who were subjected to special laws and regulations, and had a quarter of their own in the city known as the German quarter. In the course of time the dominions of Novgorod came to extend as far East as the Urals, and to an indefinite distance northward. A prince of the line of Rurik always resided in the city, but the real power lay in the hands of the popular assembly or *vieche*, which was summoned at need in the public square by the ringing of a bell, and which elected an executive from among members of the powerful merchant families. Novgorod,

Ivan III.

on account of its wealth, was an important centre of culture, which had a predominantly ecclesiastical character, and found expression in the building of a large number of churches and monasteries, many of which are still standing. But there was a rich, many-coloured and turbulent secular life, echoes of which have been handed down in the epic folk-songs or *byline*.

The principality of Tver, near Moscow, shared the fate of Novgorod, and Ivan III united the whole of Northern and North-Eastern Russia under his rule. There were other circumstances that conspired to strengthen the monarchical idea in Moscow. The fall of Constantinople, the seizure by Mohammedans of the Second Rome, the centre of Orthodox Christendom, produced a profound impression upon the Russian mind. The marriage of Ivan III with Zoe Paleologa brought the ruler of Moscow into direct connection with the house of that young Emperor, who had died bravely fighting on the walls of Constantinople, and the idea that Moscow had inherited the mission of Byzantium, was, in fact, the "Third Rome," was eagerly adopted by the Moscow court, and developed by Russian ecclesiastics. In 1492 the Lithuanian Prince Alexander formally recognised Ivan III as "Monarch of all Russia."

The new State was confronted with grave problems. Its position at the very centre of the great plain made territorial expansion a necessity of existence. There were enemies on every hand, and there was constant need to be armed for defence and attack. The whole organisation of the State—and this is characteristic of Russian policy till the beginning of the nineteenth century—was subordinated to military ends. Moscow had not had time to develop its resources, to attain to any high degree of material prosperity and social well-being before it was plunged into the turmoil of incessant and exhausting wars. Civilisation and manhood suffered terribly, but there was a steady and inexorable growth of power. In the midst of the plain, on the frontiers of Asia,

far from the vitalising currents of Western intellectual conflict and development, State power conceived of as autocracy acquired a dominance over the individual that can hardly be matched in Byzantium. Nowhere is the problem of a conflict between personality and power presented with such force and acuteness as in Russia.

The first task of the Muscovite Princes was to deal with the Tartars in the East and South-East. The Horde had split up into three distinct Khanates, those of Kazan, Astrakhan, and the Crimea, and by playing off the Khanates one against the other, Ivan III and his successors sought finally to break the Tartar power. Kazan was easily subdued, but the struggle was complicated by the constant intervention of the Crimean Khan, who now had powerful support in the person of a Turkish overlord in Constantinople. There were eighty years of raids and counter raids. The grandson of Ivan III, Ivan IV, the Terrible, who came to the throne in 1533, and who was the most striking contemporary of Elizabeth, took Kazan with its territory in 1551 and Astrakhan in 1556. In view of the raids of the Crimean Khan he was compelled to establish fortified outposts on the Steppe, thus preparing the way for the reconquest of the South. The new dominions speedily became an integral part of the Tsardom. Russian colonists settled among the Tartars in the Kazan region. Tartar princes and nobles came to the court of the Tsar and became, like the descendants of once independent Russian princes, members of the Russian aristocracy. The names of many Russian noble families, such as Urusov and Bakhmetiev, point to their Tartar origin. The Crimea stood as a constant reminder of the sovereignty of the Ottoman Turks over the Black Sea basin and the Southern steppe. Ivan's advisers submitted to him a plan for the conquest of the Crimea, but he was compelled to leave its execution to a future generation, just as he was compelled to leave to a later day the realisation of his dream of establishing the Muscovite power on the shores of the Baltic.

The Eastern frontier was further extended during the reign of Ivan the Terrible by a band of Cossack adventurers under Yermak, who defeated the Tartar Khan of Western Siberia, and made the Tsar a present of the territory in the basin of the Tobol and the Irtish. But the task of extending and strengthening the Eastern frontier was simplicity itself, compared with that of coping with more civilised Western rivals. Poland united with Lithuania had become under the strong rule of the Jagailo dynasty, a great power. A conflict with Moscow in which Lithuania had become involved during the reign of Ivan III, had served as a warning against the danger of separatist tendencies, and the union with Poland had become closer in consequence. After the final subjection of the Teutonic Order in Eastern Prussia by Casimir IV in 1466, and the assertion of Polish supremacy at the mouth of the Danube by the same King, the power of the Polish-Lithuanian State extended from the Baltic at the mouth of the Vistula to the Black Sea. The Polish cities were prosperous, the Polish upper classes were sensitive to the influences of European civilisation, the Roman Catholic Church, which was dominant in Poland, helped to maintain constant intercourse with the West, and at one time it seemed possible that this central European State might attain something like permanent greatness. But there were sources of internal weakness which even the prudence and firmness of her ablest rulers could not wholly counteract. The king was dependent on a diet composed of representatives of the nobility and gentry, who cared more for their own class and personal interests than the general interests of the State or the welfare of the common people. The presence in the diet of powerful magnates from Lithuania, frequently inheritors of Russian or Lithuanian appanages, introduced a further element of dissension and confusion. The distinction between Lithuania and Poland made itself constantly felt, more especially on religious grounds. Poland was aggressively Roman Catholic,

Eastern Extension.

while in Lithuania only the Lithuanians in the north, who formed a small minority of the population were Catholics, the bulk of the population being Russians and Orthodox. The Reformation, which influenced the upper classes in both Lithuania and Poland, temporarily checked this antagonism, but with the triumph of the counter-reformation in Poland it revived with new vigour. Over the western steppe roved bands of freebooters known as Cossacks, who were mostly Russian in language and Orthodox as to faith, and yielded little more than a nominal submission to Polish authority.

Poland formed the chief barrier to Muscovite expansion on the West. The Baltic coast was held by the Livonian knights, and Sweden, a growing power in the north, occupied Finland. The second half of the reign of Ivan the Terrible was mainly absorbed in a conflict with these three powers. The immediate result of a war which Ivan undertook with the Livonian Order and in which Sweden, Denmark, and Poland intervened, was that the Order fell to pieces and its territory was divided, the southern half falling to Poland, and the northern half to Sweden. The Muscovite State became involved in long and exhausting wars with Poland and Sweden, from which it drew no direct profit. Both these Western powers were bent on preventing such intercourse between Moscow and Western Europe as might have a civilising effect on the Russians, and so increase their political power. Ivan died in 1584, embittered by the failure of his western campaigns. But his reign had been in every way one of immense importance for the Muscovite State. He was left an orphan at the age of three, and grew up uncared for, unwatched, while the boyars or great nobles intrigued, fought and robbed around him. He learned to detest the boyars, and when he came to manhood did his utmost to break their power, invoking against them the support of the populace, and surrounding himself with a terrible guard called the *oprichina*, who murdered indiscriminately all who were supposed to be his

Conflict with the Western States.

enemies. His chief advisers during the early part of his reign were not boyars, but the priest Sylvester, and an official of humble origin named Adashev. Immediately after his coronation he convened a National Assembly, which confirmed a revised judicial code, and heard from the young Tsar's own lips his bitter complaints against the boyars, and his promise of good government in the future. Certain administrative reforms were, as a matter of fact, undertaken. The task of maintaining order in the provinces was taken from the boyar governors and laid on elders chosen by the population. The practice of collecting taxes by farming out whole districts to governors who "fed" on them, as the expression was, was abandoned in favour of a system of collecting through elected representatives of the people, all the members of which became jointly responsible to the Government. The effect of these measures was not to develop the principle of popular liberty. Rather the reverse. The power of the boyars was limited, but at the same time the masses of the people were attached more directly to the central Government, and the authority of the Tsar was increased. The chief object of these and similar measures was in fact to increase the fiscal resources of the State in view of multiplying military needs. Ivan's own character was fiercely despotic. He was subject to fits of ungovernable passion, under the influence of which he committed acts of cruelty incomprehensible in a sane man. He murdered his eldest son with his own hand. He slaughtered the citizens of Novgorod without cause. He ravaged his own country and murdered his own subjects by the hundred. His fits of passion were succeeded by long periods of remorse, and he ended his life as a monk, varying his monastic exercises with coarse revelry. But he was a statesman of remarkable talent. He clearly foresaw the natural course of Russian political development, and the work of expansion westward begun by him was consistently carried on by his successors until its completion by Peter the Great.

The personal character of Ivan the Terrible and his administrative reforms strengthened a distinctively Muscovite, singularly gaunt and merciless conception of the State. The idea of a political unity permitting of no diversity was carried to an extreme. The tillers of the soil, the peasantry, had in the course of centuries sunk into a position of absolute economic dependence on the landowners. Towards the close of the sixteenth century they were finally attached to the soil and became serfs, one of the chief objects of this measure being to ensure a regular payment of taxes. The oppressive character of the Moscow system led to a constant emigration of the more adventurous elements to the thinly-populated regions beyond the frontier. Many of them settled in the steppes on the Don, and others went Eastwards to Siberia. These rovers, like those in the steppes beyond the Dnieper, were called Cossacks, and they were the chief agents of Russian expansion eastwards.

Muscovite Rule.

Muscovite rule was hard. But Moscow, the capital, lived a very picturesque and many-sided life, with a great variety of interests of its own. The city was an exceedingly important trading centre. It traded with Persia and Central Asia by way of the Volga and Astrakhan, and the chief intermediaries in the Persian trade were then, as later, Armenians.

The Moscow Tsars tried to open up trade with India, and though the difficulties were not insuperable—an inquiry showed that it was a matter of only four months' journey from the Caspian to the Moghul capital—Persian opposition effectually barred enterprise in that direction. Greek merchants carried on trade between Constantinople and Moscow. There was a certain amount of trade with Sweden, and by way of Livonia and Novgorod, and also by way of Poland commercial relations were maintained with Germany. Direct trading relations with England were opened up in 1555 by way of Archangel, and English visitors were among the first to give detailed accounts of the Tsardom of Moscovy to the Western

world. The attempts made by Ivan the Terrible to secure from Western Europe skilled craftsmen and instructors were frustrated by Germany and Poland. Learning was not highly esteemed, as is shown by the fate of Maxim the Greek. This Maxim was an Albanian, who spent several years of study in Italy, where he became acquainted with the Humanists, among others with Aldus Mantius, and was deeply affected by Savonarola's preaching. On account of his great learning he was sent by the Abbot of the monastery of Mount Athos in which he had taken the vows to Moscow in response to a request from the Grand Prince Vasili, father of Ivan the Terrible, for a competent translator and adviser in the revision of church books. He soon came into conflict with the dissolute and avaricious clergy and nobles of Moscow, and all his learning and his spotless character did not avail to save him from life-long confinement in a monastery. And yet this man might, under more favourable conditions, have been the pioneer in a Russian renaissance.

Maxim had a few faithful disciples who profited by his lessons, and among these was Prince Kurbski, whose correspondence with Ivan the Terrible is one of the most interesting literary and historical documents of the period. Ivan himself was well-read in ecclesiastical literature, and as his letters show, possessed real literary talent. The favourite reading matter of the people was apocryphal literature, which included a number of legends of striking beauty.

Foreign trade gave colour and movement to life in Moscow, but the source of perennial popular interest was the Church with its traditions and ceremonies. The Church had a peculiarly national character, and many features in its teaching and ritual filled the stricter Greek ecclesiastics with horror. But whether fighting with Mohammedan Tartars, Roman Catholic Poles and Lithuanians or Protestant Germans or Swedes, the Muscovites always regarded themselves as upholders of the true faith against sinful error. Political conceptions were set in a framework of ecclesiastical tradition.

The centre of Eastern European trade and the capital of the Tsars was a city of churches and cathedrals. Ecclesiastical controversies aroused intense popular interest. There was the conflict with heresies, such as that of the so-called Judaisers and that of a layman named Bashkin, which seems to have been a distant echo of the Protestant Reformation. There was the long controversy over the question of landholding by monasteries, which possessed altogether about a third of the lands of Muscovy. There was the constant resort for counsel in things spiritual and material to religious recluses, men and women, though many just as frequently resorted to astrologers and fortune-tellers. There were the important questions of Church government that arose with the assumption of the title Patriarch by the chief prelate of Moscow in the seventeenth century. All these questions greatly excited the minds of the pious Muscovites in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They were indeed most assiduous in the observance of ecclesiastical as of every other kind of custom, but this did not prevent them from grossly indulging their appetites on occasion. It was a heavy, barbarous, uncritical life that the Muscovites lived, entangled in a network of custom, petty intrigue and stratagem, coarsely material, yet with a rich fund of humour and shrewd popular wisdom, and with an extraordinary capacity for devotion at the heart of it all. This capacity for devotion was displayed in the strange ecclesiastical movement in the middle of the seventeenth century when the Patriarch Nikon used his immense, almost monarchical authority, to impose on the Church in spite of the vehement opposition of the masses, new and more correct translations of the service books. Hundreds cheerfully submitted to torture or went to the stake rather than accept innovations that they considered heretical. These schismatics, the so-called Old Believers, were driven to the confines of Russian territory, and they, too, became agents in the manifold process of Russian expansion.

After the death of Ivan the Terrible the State of Moscow

passed through a period of the severest strain. Ivan's son, Feodor, ruled with the aid of a powerful noble of Tartar descent named Boris Godunov. Feodor left no heir, and with his death that branch of the Rurik line which occupied the Moscow throne came to an end. Boris Godunov had himself elected Tsar, but for all his shrewdness and ability he was unable to maintain his authority effectively over the rival boyars. When Godunov died the throne was seized by a Pretender whom Sigismund of Poland put forward as a son of Ivan named Dimitri. The False Dimitri was murdered, and a boyar named Vasili Shuisky had himself elected by a small clique of his fellows. Vasili was deposed and taken as prisoner to Warsaw. Another Dimitri appeared, and was known as the Robber of Tushino from that village to the North-West of Moscow, where he had his seat and whence he exercised with the help of Cossacks and certain of the boyars a feeble rule. The land was a prey to anarchy. Things were bad enough when there was a real Tsar at the head of affairs. The common people were oppressed beyond all endurance by the Government and nobles, and abject servility, beggary and crime were the inevitable consequences. But now there was no restraining influence whatever. Every man was striving for his own hand, and pillaged where he could. The country was open to foreign invaders. The Swedes seized Novgorod. The Poles occupied Moscow, and mocked at the Orthodox faith. The boyars scattered, seeking to secure their own advantage either by supporting the Robber of Tushino or by acknowledging as Tsar Wladislaw, the son of the Polish king Sigismund. The Polish garrison massacred the inhabitants of Moscow. Finally, at the appeal of a butcher in Nizhni-Novgorod named Minin, the people rose and organised a militia under the leadership of a prince named Pozharski and other obscure nobles and gentry. The militia marched up the Volga to Yaroslav and crossed over to Moscow, where they found a force of the Tushino Cossacks besieging the Poles at leisure. The Cossacks and the militia

viewed each other with distrust, but finally co-operated to such an extent that the isolated garrison fell before them, and Sigismund, who was hastening to its relief, was turned back on the way. The last few months of 1612 were occupied in preparations for the election of a new Tsar. A National Assembly was convened, and messengers were sent over the country to test the opinion of the people. Finally, after a long struggle between various factions, the choice of the assembly fell on a sixteen-year-old youth named Michael Romanov, the son of a prominent boyar, who had been made patriarch at Tushino under the name of Philaret. The Romanovs were distantly connected with the house of Rurik through Anastasia Romanova, the first wife of Ivan the Terrible. The election which took place on February 26th, 1613, was approved by the people, and Michael reigned peaceably, yielding the control of affairs for the first few years to his energetic father, Philaret. The fact that at a supremely critical moment, when all the leaders failed with the one exception of the Patriarch Hermogen, the State was saved by the direct efforts of the people is a remarkable proof of the vitality of the nation that had grown up under such difficult conditions in the North-East. The value of popular initiative was recognised during Michael's reign by the convocation of several National Assemblies or Zemskie Sobory, but the purely autocratic principle steadily recovered strength, and the nation again became completely subservient to the State.

Michael's reign was a period of recuperation. His son, Alexei or Alexis, was a retiring man, given to pious works, but it fell to his lot to carry on the work of expansion. An insurrection of the Cossacks of the Ukraine or western steppe against Polish rule led to Russian interverrtion and a long war with Poland, which resulted in Moscow's securing by the Treaty of Andrusovo in 1667 the possession of Kiev and the territory on the left bank of the Dnieper. During the war with Poland a war broke out with Sweden. A Russian army entered Livland but was driven back with loss, and peace

was concluded in 1661. The submission of the Cossacks west of the Dnieper to the Sultan, led to a war with Turkey (1672-1681), and after the Turks had alarmed Christendom by appearing before the walls of Vienna, Russia accepted the invitation of the Polish king Jan Sobieski to join a coalition against the Mohammedan power. The second half of the seventeenth century was thus devoted to irregular warfare with the three powers that prevented the expansion of Russia westward and southward.

The oppressive character of Muscovite administration provoked in the course of the century popular risings in Moscow, Novgorod and Pskov, and in 1667 a very serious insurrection of Cossacks and peasants in the Volga region under the leadership of Stenka Razin, who became a hero of folk-song.

Alexis was succeeded by his eldest son Feodor, who reigned only six years (1676-1682), and then after all these "quiet tsars," these tame and characterless first Romanovs, came Peter the Great like a whirlwind, and with almost superhuman energy transformed the Tsardom of Muscovy into the Russian Empire. The autocracy had been consolidated after the Time of Trouble, not by the Tsars themselves, but chiefly owing to the work of such able advisers as Michael's father, Philaret, and Ordyn-Nashchokin, the leading statesman under Tsar Alexis. Into the autocratic authority thus established Peter put all the rude force of his personal character, and used it as an instrument for dragging the Russian State from the sleepy remoteness of the heart of the plain into the restless and complex world of modern Europe. Peter was strikingly unlike his immediate predecessors, but in Philaret and in Peter's half-sister, the Princess Sophia, there was a turbulent energy that resembled his own. And then Peter's education was the reverse of the typical education of a Moscow Tsar. When he was eleven years old, his sister Sophia organised a mutiny of the Strieltsy or soldiers of the standing army, and drove Peter's mother and all the members of her family

Peter the Great.

out of the palace on the Kremlin and, still retaining her position as Regent for Peter and his brother the co-tsar Ivan, a wholly incompetent weakling, concentrated all the power in her own hands and those of her favourites. Peter lived with his mother in the village of Preobrazhenskoe, outside the city walls, where he was left very much to his own devices. He played at soldiers and sailors, built toy boats, gathered around him a host of playmates of noble and humble birth whom he organised into a sham army that afterwards formed the nucleus of a real, modern army. His experiences in the Kremlin at the time of the mutiny had filled him with a life-long disgust for the older Muscovite ways, and near Preobrazhenskoe he came into contact with a foreign colony that opened up for him a new world. Here his passion for mechanics was gratified, and from a Dutchman named Timmerman he learned arithmetic, geometry, fortification, and the use of the astrolobe. A Swiss adventurer named Lefort, with whom Peter made friends, arranged boisterous revels that effaced from the mind of the young Tsar those few lessons in the staid etiquette of the Kremlin that had been given him in his childhood. Peter was personally cut adrift from the old Moscow tradition before he came of age. He, a son of the plain, conceived a passion for the sea. The scent of salt breezes drew him westwards. He sent hundreds of young men abroad to learn the arts and handicrafts. He built a flotilla on the river Voronezh, and with the aid of this and of his newly-cast artillery, he took Azov from the Turks. Finally, in 1697, he himself went abroad to learn more thoroughly what Europe could teach in the matter of ship-building and artillery. He visited Holland where he worked as a carpenter in the shipyards of Saardam and Amsterdam, and spent several months in England. England interested him immensely, but mainly from the mechanical side. He was constantly to be seen at the dockyards at Deptford and at the Woolwich arsenal. He went frequently to the Tower to see the Mint. He once went to the House of Lords

where he saw King William on the throne, and heard some of the lords speak. He afterwards remarked to his companions that it was a very good thing to hear subjects freely expressing their views in the presence of their monarch, but he certainly did not dream of anything like constitutionalism for his own country. Peter went to Oxford, but he does not seem to have come into touch with English intellectual life at any point. When he was not looking at guns or ships or museums he spent his time in carousals with his companions, English and Russian. After he left, the owner of the house in which he had lived presented a bill for damages. The interior of the house had been completely ruined, the floor and valuable furniture broken and covered with filth, windows broken, pictures riddled with bullets. William III paid the heavy bill out of his own pocket.

Peter came back to Moscow after a stay of fifteen months abroad, with his mind full of ideas of the purely technical side of Western civilisation, and these he proceeded to apply in practice. But his mechanical reforms were made subservient to certain simple but broad ideas. He knew that Russia would be economically and politically stifled unless she secured a seaboard, and he bent his energies to the conquest of the Baltic coast. In 1700 he renewed the struggle with Sweden, and used all his recently gained technical knowledge, strained to the utmost all the resources of Muscovy in money and men in the gigantic effort through unremitting wars and a remodelling of the whole administrative system to lift the State to a new plane of development. The marvel was that he attained his end. One effect of his work was that the State penetrated more deeply into the life of the nation than ever before. He bound all classes to the State with iron bonds, made the whole people follow him panting and bleeding in his restless career. Personally he was a very human man. He was big, burly, passionate, a great drinker and reveller, and a lover of coarse pranks, an excellent mechanic, the best shipbuilder in Russia, extremely simple

and economical in most of his personal habits, good-natured, but on occasion ruthlessly cruel, restlessly active, but lacking in reflective capacity. But all these qualities acquired an immense impetus from the position of Peter on the frontier of two ages and of two worlds, and from the extraordinary character of the work he was called upon to do. He loomed up in the popular imagination like some terrible demiurge, and the legend went abroad that he was Antichrist. To this day it is difficult to form an exact estimate of his character. He has set such a wide range of forces in motion that it is difficult not to fall into the error of regarding him as their source. Peter, the man, the shipwright-tsar, with twitching face, in rusty caftan and with shoes down at the heel, is lost in the conception of the empire-builder, the maker of a vast modern Russia. He becomes a symbol, the embodiment of the elemental, forward-rushing forces of the Russian people.

Peter was always reforming, always mending. Yet most of his reforms were the result of impulse, were set in motion on the spur of the moment during a lull in a campaign, or upon a hint from some roaming foreigner. He divided Russia into governments for fiscal purposes, so as more systematically to squeeze out of the population money for the maintenance of his rapidly growing army and fleet. Then the central Government institutions proved but poor makeshifts in such a time of stress, and he had to reform them, substituting for the unwieldy Muscovite *prikazy* or inchoate ministries, Boards or Colleges on the Swedish model, and for the *Boyarskaya Duma* or Council of Boyars, a Senate which should serve as the interpreter of the Tsar's will. He created a modern army, establishing a principle of military service that embraced all classes. He built the first Russian fleet. He detested the clergy, and instituted a toper's club in the form of a parody on the hierarchy with a buffoon as mock patriarch; but more serious was his complete abolition of the real patriarchate, and his transference of the control of Church affairs to a board or ministry called the Synod

with a layman at its head. The war with Sweden, known as the Northern War, which had for Russia such important consequences, lasted off and on for twenty-one years. But Peter drifted into it almost by chance, was defeated during its early stages, and had no plan of campaign long and carefully calculated in advance. He was drawn on by the development of events to the fulfilment of his dream of the conquest of the seaboard. He was beaten at Narva, but in 1703 he beat the Swedes at Nyenschantz on the site of the present St. Petersburg, and again in the first sea fight won by Russians in modern times. But the war dragged on, and it was not until 1709 that a decisive battle was won. The Swedish King, Charles XII, with his magnificent army had crossed the Vistula in 1707, and with the aid of Cossacks of the Ukraine under Mazeppa, hoped finally to break the growing power of the Russian Tsar. But the plain drew on the masters of the sea, and two years afterwards Peter had no difficulty in scattering Charles' worn out army at Poltava in the heart of the steppe.

When peace was concluded in 1721, Russia found herself in permanent possession of the territory on the banks of the Neva and of the provinces of Livland and Esthonia. The command of the Baltic was secure. It was made more secure by an act which has had no parallel since Constantine founded a new Rome on the shores of the Bosphorus. Peter built on the swamps of the Neva a capital, looking out upon the sea and upon Europe. No other spot was so suitable for the great work. Archangel, which had long been the port for trade with the west, was too precarious and too remote an outlet, and Novgorod, the centre of north-western trade from the earliest times, was too far inland. In 1703 Peter built himself, on one of the islands of the delta a cottage, which is shown to this day, and thence directed the construction of fortresses, churches, shipyards, wooden palaces, Government offices, barracks, the draining of swamps, and the cutting though the dense forests on the left bank of the Neva

the avenues that became the " prospects," the chief arteries of the new city. He dragged his boyars from their snug homes in old-fashioned Moscow to his bleak and comfortless half-German " Sankt Peterburg " with its Peterhofs and Oranienbaums. He imported artisans from abroad, and populated the city with his new regiments, and with artisans and peasants from the interior. The city was built by forced labour, and thousands perished under the hard toil. But Peter had his way, and the capital on the Neva became a lasting monument to his rude creative energy. The very Neva is akin to him. Its broad, mighty stream flowing swiftly to the sea is the mirror of his impetuous striving.

Russia survived Peter's knout, and there could be no better proof of the nation's vitality. During his reign one-fifth of the peasantry simply disappeared, either in war or in terror-stricken flight from intolerable imposts and military service. Three-quarters of the whole budget was devoted to military and naval purposes, and little or nothing was done to relieve the wretched plight of the people. Yet in forcing backward Russia into the European family of the nations, Peter did the main thing necessary to ensure her progress. In the century that followed his death the Empire—Peter had assumed the title of Emperor (Imperator)—slowly adapted itself to the new situation.

Peter was succeeded by his second wife Catherine, a former camp-follower, who reigned with firmness and tact for two years, and then came a dreary period of nonentities. During the reigns of Peter's grandson, Peter II, his niece Anna Ioannovna and the short regency of her niece Anna Leopoldovna, the Germanised Court was plunged in heavy sensuality and in sordid and viscid intrigue. Peter's capable daughter, Elizabeth, drove out Anna Leopoldovna with her son and her Germans in 1741, and reigned with signal ability for twenty years. Elizabeth tried to train as her successor her nephew, Karl Peter Ulrich, Duke of Holstein Gottorp, but this youth proved hopelessly incompetent, and was murdered

immediately after his accession to the throne by the partisans of his wife, by birth a Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, who ascended the throne as Catherine II.

The process of territorial expansion continued throughout the century in spite of all the intrigues in St. Petersburg.

Territorial Expansion.

There was a constant succession of wars, and Russia played various parts in combinations in which were concerned the newly established Kingdom of Prussia, the France of the last three Louis, the England of the Georges, the Austria of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, an enfeebled Sweden, an expiring Poland, and a declining, but still menacing Turkey. In the first half of the century Russia supported Austria, in the second half the Prussia of Frederick the Great. There was a moment before Catherine's accession when Russian troops occupied Berlin. Poland was a pawn in the political game of the neighbouring powers, and in the reign of Catherine II was thrice divided, Russia receiving all Lithuania and the Ukraine or Little Russia west of the Dnieper. After long wars with Turkey and the conquest of the Crimea in 1784, Russia finally secured her hold on the Black Sea from the mouth of the Bug to the foot of the Caucasus, and in 1783 the last King of Georgia, Irakli, dreading absorption by Persia, acknowledged the sovereignty of the Russian Empress. From Persia Russia conquered the north-western shore of the Caspian. By the end of the eighteenth century almost the whole of what is known as European Russia, besides a considerable portion of Siberia, acknowledged the rule of the Tsars.

The strain which this expansion involved on the resources of the nation was terrible, and a relaxation of internal tension was necessary. Catherine realised this, and from the beginning of her reign deliberately set herself to promote the welfare of her subjects. She summoned a commission to draw up a general scheme of reforms based on the principles of Montesquieu. The plan proved impracticable, but the Empress did not

Catherine of Russia.

abandon the work of gradual internal reform. She began to loosen the bonds which enslaved the population to the State and promoted education, the arts, and learning. She opened schools, had schoolbooks translated, enlarged the Moscow University, which had been founded in Elizabeth's reign, gathered scholars around her, and with their aid engaged in the scientific study of her Empire. In a comparative vocabulary of the languages of the world undertaken at her instance by a versatile scholar named Pallas many entries were made by her own hand. Catherine corresponded with the French encyclopaedists, toyed with literature after the French manner of the period, and wrote plays, satirical essays, and memoirs. It is true that the effect of her civilising influence did not extend beyond the gentry, and that the masses of the people remained ignorant as before. Indeed, owing to the privileges Catherine granted to the gentry, serfdom became even more oppressive than it had been; peasant risings were frequent in consequence, and a rising of peasants and Cossacks in Eastern Russia under the leadership of a young Cossack named Emelian Pugachev, who gave himself out to be the Tsar Peter Feodorovich, gave the Government serious trouble for two years. To conceal the wretchedness of the people from his sovereign's eyes Catherine's favourite, Potemkin, set up sham villages full of well-dressed, smiling peasants along the route of her journey to the Crimea. But Catherine was sincerely desirous of the national welfare and her reign, in spite of a thousand defects, was one of real progress for Russia. Peter raised the new building of Russian statehood, but it was Catherine who first made it at all habitable.

Catherine was succeeded in 1795 by her unhappy, half-witted son, Paul, whose childishly irresponsible use of absolute power led to his assassination by a band of Court conspirators in 1801. Paul's uncanny face as depicted in Borovikovski's portrait of him in the Winter Palace, with the staring eyes, snub nose, wide nostrils, gaping mouth, seems as though

it had been thrust out mockingly from between the splendours of the preceding and following reigns for the express purpose of reminding the world of the deep-lying tragedy associated with the rise of Russian power.

Perhaps it was because of the complicity of Alexander I in his father's murder that the note of tragedy pervaded his brilliant reign. Alexander began well. When he ascended the throne the air was full of echoes of the French Revolution, and Napoleon was rapidly rising to power. Alexander's tutor, the Swiss Laharpe, had instilled into him broad ideas of liberty, equality, and justice which he made some sincere attempts to put into execution. He gave a pledge to the representatives of the Finnish people on their surrender to him before the close of the Swedish war in 1808, to observe the autonomous rights of the Grand Duchy. When, at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the territory now known as the Kingdom of Poland was allotted to him, he gave its inhabitants a constitution, and seems to have been very eager for a time that it should be a success. He made the German gentry of the Baltic Provinces emancipate their serfs. In all these measures considerations of political expediency were reinforced by a hankering sympathy with Liberal ideas. Moreover, the Napoleonic wars threw Russia into the whirl of European conflicts. Russia became a part of Europe as never before. Napoleon himself was attracted by the vastness of the Russian power, risked all his glory to gain it, and lost, defeated not by Russian generalship, but by the elemental forces of the great plain of which only the dwellers on it know the hard-won secret. The march of the Grande Armée to Moscow, the stabling of troopers' horses in the cathedrals of the Kremlin, the burning of the ancient capital, Napoleon's retreat over the snow-clad plain, his flight—these were the events that for the first time united Russia emotionally with Europe, and gave Russian patriotism a modern colouring. Deepened national feeling bore splendid literary fruit in the

Alexander I.

work of Pushkin and his contemporaries. The nineteenth century dawned in glory and in the hope of liberty. A tremor of life and intelligence passed through the inert mass of the Russian nation. The impetus to development given in the reign of Catherine now took effect. Society in the capitals became thoroughly European in character. In the literary circles of St. Petersburg and Moscow there were not a few men who were steeped in the best European culture of the period. The arts were cultivated, and St. Petersburg became from the architectural point of view one of the finest capitals in Europe. In the masses of the people, too, there was a vague groping restlessness born partly of the Old Believers' and other religious movements, partly of the Pugachev insurrection, and partly of the roving of Russian armies over Europe during the great campaigns of Suverov during the reigns of Catherine and Paul, and the Napoleonic wars in the early years of Alexander's reign. The reforms of Catherine's reign had not only liberated the gentry from such humiliating subservience to the State as was involved in the liability to corporal punishment. They had practically given over the management of the new provincial institutions into the gentry's hands. This was one way to train up a governing class, but as the gentry retained unlimited control over their peasants, the lot of the serfs was even harder than before. It was among the nobles and gentry, however, that the idea of the emancipation of the serfs was first clearly expressed. And this idea was connected with that of the limitation of the autocracy. Alexander's friends and advisers at the beginning of his reign, Novosiltsev, Stroganov, who had at one time been librarian of the Jacobin club in Paris, the Polish patriot, Adam Czartoryzski and Kochubei, who had been educated in England, were all advocates of both constitutionalism and emancipation.

But of these dreams nothing came in Alexander's reign. There was a radical reform of the central administrative institutions. The " colleges " were replaced by ministries,

and the Senate was made the highest Court of Appeal in the Empire. With the aid of a remarkable statesman, Speranski, the son of a village priest, Alexander established the Council of the Empire, a permanent body of high officials for drafting laws and undertook, but did not complete, a far-reaching and much-needed plan of financial reform. After the Congress of Vienna, Alexander's reforming ardour gradually cooled, and from 1820 onwards he became openly reactionary. His chief associates during this period were the fierce martinet and supporter of autocracy, Arakcheiev, and an ignorant and obscurantist cleric named Photii. He sank into a vague kind of mysticism, became gloomy and morose, travelled constantly over Russia as though pursued by an evil conscience, and finally died at Taganrog in 1825. Alexander was a well-meaning man, capable of generous enthusiasm, and the great events of his reign invested him with a halo of romance. But there were in him curious elements of weakness, a strange twist in his character that leaves an impression of inner failure, of rich possibilities blighted.

Liberal and revolutionary ideas had spread very widely among the educated class during Alexander's reign, and among the army officers a number of secret societies had been formed with the object of establishing a republican Russia. On the death of Alexander and the accession of his younger brother Nicholas, in place of the next of age, Constantine, who had abandoned his claim to the throne, a number of Guards' officers belonging to these societies raised a mutiny in the Senate Square in St. Petersburg, and demanded the acknowledgment of Constantine as Emperor and the promulgation of a constitution. The mutiny was suppressed, five of its ringleaders hung, and thirty-one exiled to Siberia, and Nicholas in person conducted a rigorous inquiry into the work of the secret societies. This event greatly alarmed Nicholas and set its stamp on the whole of his reign. Like his brother, Nicholas began with plans of reform, but very

Nicholas.

soon yielded to his despotic instincts, and resolutely opposed all the progressive tendencies that were rapidly making headway among the educated classes in his time. His general attitude is well expressed in a comment he made on a report on education submitted to him by the poet Pushkin. "Morality, diligent service and zeal," he declared, "are to be preferred to crude, immoral and useless education." Nicholas did not aim at suppressing education. He wished to subject it to rigid principles, to eliminate from it all revolutionary tendencies, to make it subservient to his chief aim of training up the people in loyalty to Orthodoxy, Autocracy and the Russian Nationality. Indeed, some of the young scholars whom he sent abroad to study afterwards became leaders of light and learning in the universities of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan.

But the general effect of Nicholas' measures was to stifle the free expression of thought, and as during his reign literature developed with rapidly increasing intensity the struggle between harsh police measures and an implacable censorship on the one hand and ardent thought and aspiration on the other, made the life of the educated classes excessively gloomy and depressing. German intellectual influences found their way into Russia, and gradually thrust French influence into the background. The philosophy of Schelling and Hegel was eagerly debated by groups of students and literary men. At this time it became possible sharply to distinguish two main tendencies of thought which strongly influenced subsequent development, those of the Slavophils and the Westerners. The Slavophils, adapting Hegelian theories, asserted that Russia possessed in her own traditions and her own institutions, the principles necessary for her future development; they dreamt of a Russia of free, self-governing communities under the shadow of the Autocracy and the Orthodox Church. The Westerners, on the other hand, strongly insisted that Russia could progress only through the adoption of Western institutions and Western culture.

All Nicholas' repressive measures failed to check the ferment of ideas: they only gave it an increasingly political, and in the end, a revolutionary character. It was during Nicholas' reign that the stormy anarchist Bakunin, and that most striking of Russian political thinkers, Herzan, began their long exile in Western Europe, where they worked each in his own way for the political development of Russia.

Nicholas was a manly, soldierly kind of ruler, with a strong sense of responsibility. But he trusted neither his people nor his officials, and tried to concentrate the administration of the Empire in his own hands, the result being only an oppressive development of the police system, and a steady growth of corruption amongst officials of all kinds. His despotic inclinations were intensified by the Polish insurrection in 1831, and by the French Revolution of 1848, and it was because he felt that it was his mission to oppose revolution in all forms that he sent his troops to quell the Hungarian insurrection in 1848. He made some slight additions to the territory of the Empire as the result of a war with Turkey in 1829, but the Crimean war in which he became involved at the close of his reign, brought him only humiliating defeats, and forced him to realise the disastrous effects of his despotic system of government on that very military efficiency that he prized so highly. Deeply mortified by the revelations of corruption in the army, he cried, "My friends the Decembrists (the leaders of the mutiny in December, 1825) would never have done this." Nicholas died in 1855, before the end of the war, and was succeeded by his son Alexander II.

Social Unrest.

The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by a fierce conflict between the old order and developing social forces. The process of expansion fell into the background. The western frontiers of the Empire were fixed, and expansion eastward into the territory of decaying Central Asiatic Khanates was almost effortless. The Russian people had

at last conquered the plain, and the Government availed itself of European technical discoveries to strengthen its hold on the plain by purely mechanical means such as railways and telegraphs. Railways and telegraphs, in fact, served the purposes of bureaucratic centralisation, but at the same time hastened the dissemination of new ideas. The Europe of the nineteenth century was elated and turbulent in its pursuit of progress. The world was a modern world. The old Muscovite seclusion was a thing of the far distant past. It was impossible to hold the great plain by Muscovite methods, or even the methods of Peter the Great, and the principles and methods of that virile despot Nicholas I had been tried in the Crimean War, and been found wholly wanting even from the standpoint of a merely mechanical grasp on territory. The Russian people had hitherto blindly followed the lead of an unknown destiny. But it could no longer be dragged at the heels of destiny in the form of the State. To hold and administer its immense territory the State was compelled to train a modern army and to educate a bureaucracy. But the training institutions were channels by which European ideas found their way into the minds of the governed. The universities turned out the Government official and the revolutionary, and often enough both in one person. The educated classes were keenly aware of the position of the people, and struggled to secure for it the right of intelligent participation in the great task of nation-building. The Government now yielded to the demand for reform, now retreated to its old positions. The struggle was full of tragedy, of that intricate tragedy that seems implicit in Russian development. It was a struggle between the spirit of the steppe and the spirit of the forest. And the goal of the idealists who fought against the old order was a liberty as vast and as exhilarating as the plain itself. This ideal is still present, deeply troubling, but in the process of struggle it is gradually passing from the region of abstraction to that of real and minute achievement.

Alexander II, like his uncle, Alexander I, began with reforms and ended in reaction. But the reforms of Alexander II were very far-reaching, and marked the beginning of a new epoch of development.

Alexander II.

The new Emperor first of all modified the severity of the police regime, gave a certain amount of liberty to the press, and then with the help of his talented brother, Constantine Nikolaievich, the enlightened Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, who cultivated the friendship of scholars and literary men, and had effected the organisation of medical aid to the wounded during the Crimean War, the broad-minded statesman, Nicholas Miliutin, and many other men of mark, he began the work of reform from the base upwards. The first and most urgent task to be undertaken was that of the emancipation of the serfs. From the end of the eighteenth century onwards, Liberals had demanded the abolition of serfdom, the more enlightened landowners had long since begun to realise that it was economically unprofitable, and the disasters of the Crimean War had shown the Emperor himself that the continued existence of serfdom was a danger to the State. Committees were organised in the various governments to study the question, and editorial commissions sifted the materials. The Chief Committee in St. Petersburg finally drafted an elaborate emancipation scheme, which after discussion in the Council of the Empire was in its main features confirmed by the Emperor, and in a manifesto issued on February 19th (March 4th), 1861, which the landlords were commanded to read to their assembled peasants, the institution of serfdom was abolished in Russia. Alexander's energy in carrying this great reform through in the teeth of the opposition of powerful cliques of reactionary landlords, was the more remarkable seeing that he was not a reformer by instinct or training, but was simply convinced of the political necessity of the measure. Over ten million peasants were liberated and enabled to purchase allotments of land from their former masters through the Government, by means of a system of

redemption payments, spread out over a long term of years in the form of an addition to the taxes. In Little Russia the allotments became the property of individual peasants, while amongst the Great Russian peasantry the ownership of the land of the freed serfs was vested in the village communes. The change effected was a veritable upheaval, and in order to cope with the immense work of reorganisation involved a reform of local government became necessary. Zemstvos or Provincial and District Councils, composed of elected representatives of the gentry, the peasantry and the townspeople were established in thirty-three governments of European Russia with power to levy rates, to maintain schools, roads and hospitals, and generally to promote the economic welfare of the population. The Zemstvos became strongholds of progress, training schools for public workers, and forerunners of constitutionalism in Russia. Justice was in a deplorable condition, and here, too, reform was urgently necessary. By measures enacted in 1864 a radically new judicial system was established, theoretically more perfect, juster, more humane than any other European system. All these reforms, known as the Great Reforms of the Sixties, aroused an ardour for progress, a passionate humanitarianism, a sense of rich and manifold opportunity such as had never been known in Russia before. Public opinion came into existence in a land till then almost inarticulate, and public opinion was aboundingly optimistic. But the hopes awakened by the reforms fell short of fulfilment, and in 1866 a reaction set in.

The comparative liberty given to the press in the early years of Alexander's reign had stimulated an intellectual movement; social and political questions were eagerly debated under a thin veil of literary criticism, and public opinion divided itself into three camps,—the Slavophils, and a Liberal and a Socialist group of Westerners. The chief organ of the Liberals was Herzen's *Kolokol* (The Bell), which was published in London, was read by influential members

of the Government, including the Emperor himself, and greatly influenced the course of the Emancipation Reform. The Slavophils, led by Aksakov and Samarin, had their centre in Moscow, while the Radicals, under the leadership of Chernishevski, were grouped around the monthly *Sovremennik*. The growth of Radical and Socialist tendencies alarmed the Government, and in 1862 Chernishevski and several of his associates were arrested and deported to the Siberian mines. The insurrection which broke out in Poland in 1863, and which provoked the Government to severe reprisals, including the entire abolition of Polish autonomy, was at first looked on by the Russian Liberals with a certain sympathy. But the intervention of European powers at the instance of Napoleon III led to a strong revulsion of feeling in favour of the Government, and a prominent Liberal publicist, Katkov, became from this time on the ablest advocate of the Government policy. Herzen, by strongly taking the side of the Poles during the insurrection, lost the enormous prestige he had hitherto enjoyed in Russia, and he became identified with the Radical group. It was about this time that the so-called "Nihilist" tendency made itself manifest. The Nihilists were the Futurists of that period. They were young Radicals who in their passion for science and progress scoffed at aesthetics, defied conventions of every kind, pooh-poohed religion and tradition, and admitted no guide but reason. But Nihilism was only a tendency. There was never a party called Nihilists, and Nihilists were not necessarily terrorists, though terrorists were often Nihilists in their attitude to life. It was from the tumult of conflicting forces that marked the early sixties that the revolutionary movement developed.

Alexander grew weary of reform and alarmed at the complex variety of social forces his reforms had called into action, and when in 1866 a nam named Karakozov, acting entirely on his own responsibility, fired a shot at the Emperor, the policy of the Government was reversed. A new period of reaction began, and during this period the revolutionary movement

steadily gained in strength. No further reforms were granted, repressive measures were directed against the press and the Zemstvos, and the police powers of the governors were extended. Amongst the students of the universities arose a movement known as " going into the people," which meant that educated young men and women carried the University Settlement principle to its utmost limit, that is to say, they tried to bring enlightenment to the ignorant peasants by mixing with them, and living and dressing exactly as they did. At first this movement had a purely educative and humanitarian character. It was only later that it became political. The political revolutionary movement was developed abroad by Bakúnin and his associates. But the Government, by constantly arresting young men and women who gathered together in conspirative mutual improvement societies where they eagerly studied how they might be useful to the people, promoted the growth of a revolutionary movement at home. Prince Krepotkin brought Bakunin's revolutionary writings into Russia, and hundreds of students went amongst the peasants, this time not to teach them the alphabet, but to incite them to insurrection. About a thousand of these students were arrested. The Government redoubled its repressive measures, and struck at random in its efforts to crush the revolutionary movement. But the revolutionaries organised in 1876 a party under the name of Land and Liberty with the object of bringing about an agrarian revolution. This was the first organisation of any strength that was avowedly terrorist in character. A peaceable demonstration arranged by the party in the Kazan Square in St. Petersburg, led to a large number of arrests and to fresh additions to the long procession eastwards to Siberia. In 1877 a girl named Vera Zasulich fired at and wounded General Trepov the prefect of St. Petersburg, because he had a political prisoner flogged for refusing to lift his hat. The Government, hoping to rally public opinion to its side, had the case tried in open court, but Vera Zasulich defended herself with such effect

that she won the sympathy of the public, and the jury acquitted her. This incident greatly stimulated the energies of the terrorists.

But the revolutionaries were at that time a small minority. The reaction weighed heavily on all classes, but it could not stay a powerful intellectual movement, and it was in the sixties and seventies that Turgeniev, Tolstoy and Dostoievski produced the novels that made Russian literature famous throughout Europe. The Government itself had recourse to the aid of the press, and its efforts to form a strong body of conservative public opinion were vigorously supported by Katkov, who in the *Moskovskia Viedomosti* (Moscow Gazette), supplied the Government with ideas in the shape of an extreme Nationalism. A wave of genuine national enthusiasm swept over the country when in 1877 Alexander came to Moscow and solemnly declared war against Turkey in the name of the liberation of the Bulgarians. There was a momentary revival of the ardour of the early sixties, and many disappointed revolutionaries rushed to the front to serve as volunteers or as medical helpers. But the war had no effect on the internal situation, and Liberals complained bitterly that the Emperor, who had given a constitution to liberated Bulgaria, withheld one from his own Empire. Terrorist attacks on governors and gendarme officers became frequent, and two more attempts were made on the life of Alexander. The "Land and Liberty" party split into a purely terrorist group named the *Narodnaya Volia* or "People's Will," and an agrarian group, and the Narodnaya Volia entered on a systematic terrorist campaign. The Government retaliated by multiplying repressive measures, and in 1880 an Armenian, Count Loris-Melikov, was appointed Dictator for the purpose of rooting out sedition. A lull in the terrorist campaign gave Loris-Melikov, who was in friendly intercourse with the Zemstvo Liberals, occasion to induce Alexander to continue the work of reform by preparing the ground for a constitution. But he had hardly begun to put his plans

into execution when on March 14th, 1881, Alexander II, when driving in a sleigh along the Catherine Canal in St. Petersburg, was killed by bombs thrown by the terrorists of the Narodnaya Volia.

The murder of Alexander II threw back the work of reform for years, and intensified the reaction. Alexander III, the new Emperor, believed solely in police methods of government, and the Nationalism of Katkov and of Alexander's chief adviser, that strange reactionary for conscience' sake, Pobiedonostsev, formed the staple of the Government policy. The Russian Empire includes a large number of peoples of non-Russian nationality whom the Russians had subdued in the process of their conquest of the plain. There are Germans, Poles and Esthonians in the Baltic provinces, Poles in the South-West, Little-Russians in the South, Jews in the former territory of the Polish State, Armenians, Georgians, and a host of smaller peoples in the Caucasus, Tartars in the Caucasus, in Eastern Russia and Siberia, and a variety of other peoples in Siberia and Central Asia. The Government aimed at forcibly assimilating these peoples to the Russian nationality, but the policy of Russification instead of consolidating the unity of the Empire aroused bitter resentment against the ruling race. The chief sufferers during the reign of Alexander III were the Poles, the Jews, and the Germans of the Baltic provinces. For Russians there was not a glimmering hope of reform. A great extension of territory was effected in Central Asia, and the influence of Russia in European affairs was increased by the conclusion of an alliance with France. Alexander III was a sturdy soldier of limited intelligence, but with a strong sense of his duty as an autocrat and a curious faith in a blend of faded Muscovite romanticism with the virtues of modern artillery and strategical railways.

Alexander III.

Alexander III died in 1894, and the autocracy outlived him by eleven years. During the early years of the reign of the present Emperor Nicholas II, there were no outward

symptoms of the approaching change. The policy of Russification was continued and was applied with great vigour to Finland where under the shelter of the autonomous rights, maintained in their integrity by Alexander I and his successors a stubborn and capable people had developed an interesting culture of its own. The Minister of Finance, Count Witte, a man with a keen modern business mind, tried to give a new lease of life to the autocratic and bureaucratic system by measures of a purely technical character, such as railway construction, the artificial promotion of industrial enterprises, and a reform of the monetary system by the establishment of the gold standard. But the Russia that made possible an autocracy was quietly slipping away. Strategical railways were arousing villages from their sleep, and bringing them to rapidly-growing capitals. Factory chimneys had risen up in clusters at various points on the plain. In the region of the Don there was a Black Country of mines and foundries. During the second half of the century, Poland, the Moscow region, Riga and St. Petersburg, had become important manufacturing centres, and millions of peasants were abandoning their homespun for the cheap cotton goods which all kinds of enterprising middlemen, from the anglicised wholesale dealer to the old-fashioned bearded merchant in a caftan and the Tartar pedlar, hawked over the plain from Reval to Vladivostok. With the increase of population the land allotments of the Emancipation period had grown too small, and the peasantry were restless and discontented. The number of schools had little by little increased, and new ideas were slowly finding their way into the masses. The educated classes were gradually recovering from the apathy into which they had sunk during the eighties. The famine of 1892 was a sharp call to compassion, and eager bands of helpers illustrious and obscure—Tolstoy, side by side with a village schoolmistress—hastened to relieve the starving peasants of the Volga region. The growth of industry modified the

Nicholas II.

views of the Socialist groups. In the nineties, Social Democrats made their appearance, and attacking the older school of Populist Socialists who pinned their faith to the peasantry, concentrated all their efforts on agitation among the factory workmen. The Zemstvo Liberals groped their way towards organisation, and in 1902 founded in Stuttgart a Liberal organ of the type of the Kolokol under the editorship of Peter Struve. A Social Revolutionary party was founded in 1900, and both Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries formed organisations abroad among the hundreds who had at one time or other escaped from police repression in their native land for political reasons, smuggled their literature into Russia, and carried on conspirative propaganda amongst the workmen and peasantry, and the students in the Universities and technical schools. Terrorist action was renewed in the early years of the present century, and the political police scented revolution everywhere.

But revolutionary activity was very slight considering the vast extent of the Empire, and on the surface things were quiet. President Faure and President Loubet came to St. Petersburg, and the Emperor Nicholas went to France, and the alliance between France and Russia was firmly cemented. M. Witte tried to swell the exchequer and diminish drinking by establishing a State brandy monopoly. There was a movement to the Far East. The Trans-Siberian railway was completed, Russian troops occupied Manchuria, and a Russian naval base was established at Port Arther. But it was just this movement of expansion when internal conditions were unstable that led to disaster. In January, 1904, Japan declared war on Russia, and in the war that followed Russia suffered an unparalleled series of defeats. The war let loose all the forces of discontent at home. While Russian armies retired step by step before the Japanese in Manchuria, a revolutionary movement rapidly developed in the centre of the Empire. It began with the assassination of the Minister of the Interior

Alliance with France.

Plehve, in July, 1904, it received a tremendous impetus from the shooting down of workmen on Red Sunday, June 22nd, 1905, in St. Petersburg, and after the conclusion of peace in August it culminated in a general strike throughout Russia. The strike was brought to an end by the promulgation on October 30th, 1905, of that manifesto by which the Emperor limited his power, affirmed the principles of civil liberty, and declared that thenceforward no law should be valid without the consent of an elective National Assembly. This manifesto marked the end of a historical epoch and the beginning of a new era of development. It was an expression of the formal abolition of the autocracy and the establishment of constitutional government in Russia.

CHAPTER II

THE BUREAUCRACY AND THE CONSTITUTION

DURING the last few years Russia has been absorbed in a struggle between bureaucracy and constitutionalism. The struggle is not yet over. Its forms change from year to year. It becomes more complex and more profound. There has been nothing quite like it in all the world's history. Some of its phases may be illustrated from the history of other European countries, but references to the French Revolution, to the Italian Risorgimento, or to the establishment of representative institutions in Germany, will not explain the Russian struggle. The Russian constitutional movement was preceded by similar movements on the Continent of Europe, in Germany and in Austria, though it lagged nearly three-quarters of a century behind these. In its turn it gave an impulse to constitutional movements in the East, first in Persia, then in Turkey, and last of all in China. But as is well known, the promulgation of constitutions in Eastern countries has not been followed by such striking and indubitable progress as was anticipated; has in fact, in some cases, served only the more clearly to reveal how deeply these countries were sunk in decay. And then again the experience of the last few years has shown that on the European continent, in America, and in England itself, constitutional government, though obviously a tremendous advance on absolutism, is not such a simple and all-sufficing remedy for the ills of the body politic as it seemed fifty years ago. Russia is in the extraordinarily difficult position of having to deal at once with the problems of East and West. She has to make up for lost time in the adoption of European institutions, at a moment when Europe itself is trying to adapt them to more

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complex social conditions. And she has to tide over that most painful of all periods when constitutional principles have not acquired energy enough to transform the body politic, but serve simply to lay bare the havoc wrought by centuries of despotic government. It is true that the promulgation of the Constitutional Manifesto in 1905 marked the beginning of a new era for Russia. But the early years of the new era have brought even more acute suffering than did the later years of the old, just as a latent disease becomes more violent when it finds its way into the open. The remedy that began by bringing the disease to the surface will gradually effect a recovery. But the process involves shocks and constant relapses and intense pain. And the subject of this process is not a tiny Belgium, or an island in the midst of the sea, or a comfortably-sized Germany, but an immense Empire with a population of 160 millions, and watchful enemies on her Eastern and Western frontiers. Revolution and reaction, liberty and repression, all the words with which we are accustomed to express phases of the struggle for representative government have acquired in the vast sweep of the Russian constitutional movement a hundred new connotations and implications. There is nothing simple here, nothing to which justice can be done by familiar and hackneyed phrases.

The main issue, however, is clear. The struggle is being waged between the bureaucracy and constitutionalism. But what is the bureaucracy? Literally, it is rule by means of bureaux or Government offices. But there are Government offices in every country, and the distinction between a civil service and a bureaucracy is that the former is subject to control while the latter is not. A bureaucrat may be a perfectly reasonable, capable and hard-working being in so far as he is a civil servant, but in so far as he exercises the power of the State arbitrarily and irresponsibly he can, and human nature being what it is, very likely will do a very great deal of harm. The Russian State has been held together very largely owing to the fact that the highly organised civil service

which carries on the business of administration was by no means wholly incompetent, and did a certain amount of useful work every day of the year. What very nearly ruined the State completely was the fact that the total absence of popular control over the bureaucracy set a premium on incompetence and dishonesty, and encouraged the worst forms of exploitation. It would seem quite simple to remedy matters by putting the bureaucracy under popular control and giving the people, through its elected representatives, a voice in legislation. But the very bigness of Russia makes the application of such a remedy difficult, because nowhere in the world has a highly-centralised bureaucracy had at its uncontrolled disposal such a vast territory and such an enormous extent of political power. It is true that the bureaucracy exercised power in the name of the Monarch. But in practice this delegated dominance was hardly distinguishable from original power and an *ispravnik* or district Chief of Police in Siberia, wrought his will on the population with unchallenged authority. The task of bringing under popular control such an immense and complex organisation with such a tangled variety of personal interests and such a heavy weight of tradition behind it, would have been almost a hopeless one if the bureaucracy had been thoroughly efficient. But a bureaucracy naturally tends to collapse under the burden of its own corruption, and the demonstration of bureaucratic incompetence and corruption given in the Russo-Japanese war facilitated the task of the reformers.

The Civil Service.

It would be quite wrong to say that the Russian Civil Service is wholly composed of bureaucrats pure and simple. There are bureaucrats, a great many of them, and there are also a number of Government employees who to-day are more or less tinged with the bureaucratic spirit, but to-morrow would do their duty just as well or even better if a Constitutional regime were in full swing. The Russian Government Service, taken as a whole, includes a large number of interesting types,

from elegant men of the world to that pettifogging Dryasdust familiarly known as a "Chancellery rat," from the rough red-faced police captain to the mild-mannered bespectacled excise clerk, from the dried-up martinet at the head of a St. Petersburg department to the slow-moving, long-haired country postmaster. Governors, senators, clerks of court, tax collectors, school-inspectors, telegraph clerks, customs officials, wardens of the peasantry, heads of consistories, all are engaged in the business of the Empire, all are formally in the service of the Tsar. It is a State in uniform. The very schoolboys wear uniform, and even high-school girls have to wear brown dresses and brown aprons. Ministers wear uniforms, not in the routine of work in St. Petersburg, but on State occasions and when they travel about the country. Judges wear uniforms, and so do Government engineers and land-surveyors, and a host of other people whose salary filters down through many channels from the St. Petersburg Treasury. Brass buttons and peaked caps, peaked caps and brass buttons, uniforms with blue, red, or white facings meet the eye with wearisome monotony from end to end of the Empire, from the Pacific to the Danube. A Russian may wear uniform his whole life long. As a little boy of eight he goes proudly off to a preparatory school in a long grey overcoat, reaching almost to the ground, and in a broad-crowned cap with the peak tilted over his snub nose. When school days are over he dons the uniform of a student, and after a few years at University or Technical College, enters a Ministry and puts on one of the many official uniforms. The years pass, he is gradually promoted, and at fifty he is trudging in uniform with portfolio under his arm to his Ministry, just as with bag on shoulders he tramped to school when he was a little boy of eight.

All the Government officials are *Chinovniks*, that is to say, each of them stands in a definite *chin*, or rank. Peter the Great established an order of promotion called the *Tabel*

Rangov, or Table of Ranks, and this order is in force to the present day. Once a man is drawn into the subtle mechanism of the Table of Ranks he may go on from grade to grade with hardly an effort on his part, by the mere fact of existing and growing wrinkled and grey-haired. When he enters the Government service he receives a paper called the *formuliarny spisok* or Formular List, in which the events of his life are noted down from year to year—his appointment to a particular table in the Ministry of Justice, his marriage, the birth of his children, his leave, his illnesses, his appointment to a commission or committee, his despatch on special service, and then the long series of decorations and promotions, various degrees of the Order of St. Anne, St. Stanislav, St. Vladimir, and it may be high up on the last rungs of the bureaucratic ladder such coveted decorations as the Order of St. Andrew, or even the White Eagle. The orders are a reward for good service. But the *chins*, or grades, need not necessarily be so. A *chinovnik* may be promoted from grade to grade simply for "having served the due term of years," as the phrase is, but his promotion may be hastened through favour in high places or in recognition of special diligence or ability. The names of grades have no meaning except as indicating the grade. They are the same throughout the civil service, and give no suggestion of the office held by the possessor. They were originally adapted from German titles, and look imposing when re-translated into German. Thus the grade of *nadvorny sovietnik* is not a particularly high one, but when it appears in German as Hofrat or Court Councillor the impression is given that the possessor is a personage of considerable importance. But the really important *chins* are that of *Staatsky Sovietnik*, which is perhaps not so important as it looks in its German guise of Staatsrath, or Councillor of State, but seems to secure a man against undue caprices on the part of Fortune, and to invest him with an air of respectability; and then the grades that make

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the man who attains to them a noble if he is not one by birth. There is a *chin* that conveys personal nobility, and the *chin* of *dieistvitelny staatsky sovietnik*, or Real State Councillor, conveys hereditary nobility. In this way the ranks of the gentry are constantly recruited from the bureaucracy, and the traditional connection between rank and Government service is maintained in actual practice. The grade of Real State Councillor also conveys the rank of a general in the Civil Service and the title of Excellency. The average *chinovnik* thinks himself happy if he reaches such an exalted *chin* as this. Most professors become Real State Councillors by virtue of length of service, and it sounds odd to hear a stooping, frock-coated gentleman who is distinguished as an able lecturer on mediaeval history, spoken of as a general. The grades of Secret Councillor and Real State Councillor are reserved either for very old or for very distinguished members of the Civil Service, for ministers and ambassadors, and the like.

The system of grades is one of the forces that hold the bureaucracy together. It secures a certain uniformity of temper, tendency and aim. Russians are the most democratic people in the world, but this carefully adjusted system of grades, decorations, money premiums and, to close with, pensions corresponding to the *chin* attained, appeals to an ineradicable human instinct for outward symbols of position, security and distinction, and makes of the bureaucracy a world apart, a world in which the interests of all the members are interwoven. It is curious how mortified even a Radical magistrate will be if his name fails to appear among the Real State Councillors in the annual promotion list, and, on the other hand, with what unalloyed pleasure he receives congratulations if he has been given the coveted grade after all. But there is another very characteristic feature of the bureaucracy, and that is its extraordinary centralisation. From the big dreary-looking yellow or brown buildings in St. Petersburg, in which the Ministries are housed, currents

of authority, of directive energy go forth to all the ends of the great Empire in the form of telegrams or occasional oral messages by special couriers, but above all in the form of endless "papers." Pens scratch, typewriters click, clerks lay blue covers full of papers before the "head of the table"; the "head of the table" sends them to the "head of the department," to the Assistant Minister, if need be, and in the more important cases, the Assistant Minister to the Minister. Then back go the papers again with signatures appended, down through various grades for despatch to a judge, to another department, to a Governor, to a *chinovnik* on special service, or to some petitioner from the world without. Incoming and outgoing papers are the systole and diastole of the Chancelleries. All sorts of documents go under the general name of *bumaga* or "paper," from a warrant for arrest to a report on a projected railway, or a notification of taxes due. There are *doklady* or reports, and *otnoshenia* or communications between officials of equal rank, and *donesenia* or statements made to superiors, *predpisania* instructions or orders, and *proshenia*, applications or petitions. These and a hundred others besides are all "Papers," and there is a special style for each of them, and a general dry and formal style for all of them known as the "Chancellery Style," which permeates Russian public life, and creeps into private letters and concert programmes, and newspaper articles, and into the very love-making of telegraph clerks waiting for trains on wayside stations. The "papers," their colour, the stamps upon them, their style, create an immense uniformity of mental content, and tend to level down the striking differences that exist between say, the Tartar policemaster in a town on the Caspian Sea, and the son of a Russian priest who serves as a clerk in the financial department in Tver. It is extraordinary discipline. The lack of variety in the system increases its hold on all its members. There are hardly any of the curious divergencies and inconsistencies of which the English administrative system is so full, hardly any quaint

anachronisms left to linger on because of some wise use they have for the affections. There are certain inevitable modifications in the Caucasus, in Central Asia, in Bessarabia and in Siberia, Poland and the Baltic Provinces. But generally speaking the system as outlined in mathematical order on smooth white paper, is embodied with surprising accuracy in the network of institutions that cover the great plain from limit to limit. Authority is delegated from the big yellow Ministries in St. Petersburg to the dreary white buildings in the head towns of the governments or territories into which the whole Empire is mapped out, and from the government towns to the head towns of the districts into which each government is divided, and then down to the smallest towns and to the Wardens of the Peasantry. The uniformity of it all is both imposing and depressing, and as wearying as the inevitable red-capped stationmaster and brown-coated gendarme on every one of the scores of railway stations between Wirballen and Harbin.

The integrity and uniformity of the bureaucratic system is maintained, the system is held in its framework, so to speak, by means of the army. The army, in its turn, by means of the conscript system, subjects almost the whole male population to a uniform discipline, levels down, for a time at any rate, the distinctions between various regions and various nationalities, and serves as a most potent means of Russification. Russification, indeed, is not the word, though it is the Russian language that is used in the process, for it is not the interests of the Russian people that are primarily in question but the interests of the State. It is a moulding of all the human material of the Empire upon one State pattern, a persistent elimination of divergencies, a grandiose attempt to subordinate all the wayward impulses of 160 millions of human beings to one common aim unintelligible to the mass. The army supplies the clamps by which the vast mechanism of the bureaucracy is held in position.

But it is through the police that the bureaucracy carries out its function of maintaining order. And the police have of late years assumed an overweening importance in the State because the bureaucracy has constantly tended more and more to limit its functions to the maintenance of order. It has subordinated everything to this end. It has become immensely suspicious. The very success, the very efficiency of the bureaucracy has been its ruin. In so far as it governed well, administered justice, prevented crime, promoted education, built roads and railways, and furthered trade, it encouraged individual initiative, fostered the desire for liberty. And at the same time it opened the eyes of many to its own corruption, to the depredations on the national wealth and welfare carried on under the veil of order, strict uniformity and long-armed discipline. On both occasions when the clamps were loosened, when the army was defeated in the Crimea in 1854-5, and in Manchuria fifty years afterwards, the evils of the bureaucracy were vividly revealed, the system almost fell asunder. Almost, but not quite. For after the Crimean War reforms were effected and the system was modernised, and again after the Japanese war reforms were granted and a further attempt was made at modernisation. But on each occasion concessions were followed by a reassertion of bureaucratic authority by means of the police. The nineteenth century was a century of movement, even in Russia. The emancipation of the serfs meant the freeing of an enormous amount of pent-up energy of economic development, it aroused a hum of fresh and vigorous movement all over the Empire. But for that strange complexity of widely extended, exclusive interests for which the bureaucracy stands, and for that rigid external uniformity which is the aim of its efforts movement was dangerous. The bureaucracy took fright at the new, high-spirited movement of the sixties, and instead of steadily promoting economic and educational development, set to work to devise a system of checks. It tried to render

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its own reforms innocuous, set bureaucratic safeguards on its own judicial system, and bound and weakened those Zemstvos, or elective County Councils, which impaired the integrity of the bureaucratic system by exerting the functions of local government in thirty-four governments of European Russia. And the maintenance of order interpreted as the prevention of movement became the bureaucracy's prime care.

The population increased rapidly, trade grew, factories arose, a labour movement came into being. The connection with Europe became closer and more vital, and through the connecting tissue the swift beating of the pulse of the West was felt in Russia. The progressive movement gathered strength. Checked overground it went underground, and became revolutionary and terrorist. The terrorist movement, and more particularly the assassination of Alexander II, heightened the fears of the bureaucracy. The whole nation became suspect; sedition was scented everywhere; the police gained influence and authority, and the application of the term "political crime" to almost all forms of denial of the autocracy afforded an extraordinarily wide field for the exercise of repressive measures. That is why the bureaucracy came to be chiefly impersonated in a modernised and highly organised police system. That is why bureaucratic administration came to be so aggressively prohibitive of progress, and why gendarmes and prefects and policemasters and *ispravniks* (heads of district police) and the *Okhrana* or Political Police and detectives of various kinds came to occupy such a prominent position in the forefront of Russian public life. It was the rigid centralisation, the exclusiveness of the bureaucracy, the extremely wide interpretation of the term "political crime" and the extraordinary powers given to the police that made the bureaucratic system particularly hard to bear at a time when thought was awakening, and the economic and intellectual energies of the nation were straining for free development.

There were alleviating circumstances, of course. If the German conceptions which entered so largely into the bureaucratic system had been put into practice with truly German industry and rigidity, there would simply have been no breathing-space at all. But sheer native indolence and good nature often made officials wink at breaches of the law, and even corruption had its milder aspects, for while bribery gave frequent occasion for extortion and blackmail, it often protected the feeble against unendurable oppression. Then the fact that the members of the bureaucracy were human beings with kith and kin in the world outside counted for a great deal. Revolutionaries and Constitutionalists often found it possible to secure through relatives "protection" in high places. Influential persons often "begged" or "bustled about," as the saying is, for those in trouble, and this through all grades of the bureaucracy. It might easily happen that the sister or the son of a Governor or Crown Prosecutor was a revolutionary. There was one other fact that for a time tended to keep the bureaucracy in touch with the general life of the nation. Most of the country gentry were employed in the Government Service, and after the sixties there was a liberal and humane movement amongst the gentry, which affected the bureaucracy. But members of the gentry tended to let their land slip out of their possession, and to become entirely dependent on Government service. And for this reason the bureaucracy became more and more a caste apart, suspicious of the rest of the nation, dry and hard.

It was at the beginning of the twentieth century, under the iron rule of the Minister of the Interior, Plehve, that the bureaucracy most distinctly assumed the form of a system of rigid police control. Plehve displayed consummate art and extraordinarily singleness of aim in the application of all the means of repression. He was determined to crush the opposition movement in all its forms—the Constitutional movement which was centred in an organisation composed chiefly of members of the Zemstvos, or County Councils, and

found expression in the publication of a Liberal organ, called *Osvobozhdenie* (Liberation) in Stuttgart, the labour movement which led to a number of strikes chiefly, in Southern Russia, and was furthered by the Socialist parties having their centre in Switzerland, and the terrorist movement maintained by the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Plehve strengthened the Political Police, developed the detective system, maintained an extremely strict censorship, and created an atmosphere of oppressive stillness in the country. During his term of office the war with Japan broke out, and although Plehve advocated war in the hope that it would divert the growing forces of internal discontent, the war had the reverse effect of fanning the flame of the constitutional agitation. It was at this time that a series of events began which demand here a brief review, for apart from them the present position is wholly unintelligible.

Constitutional Agitation.

In July, 1904, shortly after the Japanese war began, Plehve was murdered by the bomb of an assassin. The Government for a time relaxed its severity, and the Constitutional agitation among the educated classes had greater scope. In November, with the tacit permission of the Government, a conference of leading Zemstvo or County Council workers, was held in St. Petersburg, and passed resolutions affirming the necessity of civil liberty and the establishment of representative institutions. Then a strange movement began among the working men of St. Petersburg. A priest named Gapon organised Working-men's Clubs on behalf of the Government, with the object of combating the conspirative Socialist organisations. But he made use of the influence he had gained and of the unrest caused by the war, and by the echoes of the constitutional agitation to place himself at the head of a workmen's movement, the aim of which was directly to petition the Tsar to grant his people liberty. On the morning of January 22nd, 1905, the workmen in the various districts in the outskirts of St. Petersburg formed in procession to march to the Winter

Palace and present their petition to the Emperor. But the Emperor did not appear.

It was a beautiful winter morning, with a sharp frost and a sun brilliantly shining from a pale-blue sky upon the white expanse of the Neva and the snow-covered roofs and streets of the city. Down the Nevsky Prospect walked unceasingly with set, firm faces, working men, young and old, in black winter overcoats and black lambskin caps. There was something uncanny in their intentness. In the great white square before the Winter Palace a bivouac fire was burning, and around it soldiers were boxing to keep themselves warm. The throng from the Nevsky was held back from the Square by a line of dragoons, who from time to time charged down the sidewalks and sent the throng scattering. On the North side of the Neva, near the Finland Station, rifles were stacked and soldiers stood waiting. Near the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul before the oldest of the St. Petersburg churches, a score of mounted dragoons were drawn up in line, commanding the square. Past the People's Palace, a procession came marching, workmen in black, intent and solemn, a student or two, and two or three women. They sang a little and then moved silently. They entered the square near the fortress. There was a bugle-call from the opposite side, but they marched on. There was a warning volley, and then three volleys of loaded cartridge. With shouts and cries the procession scattered, and the dead and wounded lay upon the snow. So all the processions were met and scattered, that led by Gapon among the rest.

A Black Sunday.

Near the Winter Palace the throng grew and pressed on and on. Then the troops fired, bringing down little boys perched on the trees in a neighbouring public garden and killing and wounding many men and women. A little further up the Nevsky Prospect, near the Police Bridge, the troops again fired. Again killed and wounded, again groans and cries, and a terror-stricken scattering crowd spreading indignation throughout

the city. A sleigh drove swiftly up the Nevsky followed by half-a-dozen workmen running with bare heads and crossing themselves, some weeping. In the sleigh sat a youth holding in his arms a student, dead, his face one gaping wound. Three or four Cossacks came galloping up on horseback, pulled rein, looked at the sleigh, then rodè on with a jeering laugh. The sun set in a roseate sky, the evening fell, crowds wandered about the streets with helpless imprecations, the wounded were brought to the hospitals or cared for in private houses. Cossacks and dragoons guarded the Government buildings, and from time to time charged down the Nevsky, driving loiterers before them like chaff before the wind. It is not known to a certainty to this day how many hundreds were killed on that terrible Sunday when the workmen set out to petition the Tsar for liberty.

That day turned trust into bitterness, and the longing for justice into a desperate endeavour. A revolutionary movement leapt from city to city, from town to town, till all the towns of the Empire were in a ferment, and unrest spread even to remote villages. Workmen went out on strike, police raids and arrests became the order of the day. Streets were patrolled by Cossacks. In Warsaw the troops charged and fired on a procession of working-men. Here and there bombs were thrown at police officials and other representatives of the Government. Manufacturers, members of municipal councils, doctors, lawyers and professors held meetings, conferences and congresses to devise a remedy for the situation. A Congress of lawyers, and later a Congress of literary men, held secretly in St. Petersburg, formulated demands for the establishment of a democratic system of government. In April an important Congress of Zemstvo Representatives, held in Moscow in various private houses in defiance of the prohibition of the police, set to work to give point and detail to the demand of the Liberal gentry for a Constitution. It became a custom to hold Liberal meetings in secret with the

The Spread of Rebellion.

knowledge that Cossacks were waiting around the corner. And somehow people of a sudden found their tongues, lost that fear of open speech which had become habitual under the Plehve regime, and when they spoke openly in trains and public places they spoke much of the Constitution and little of the war that was bringing defeat after defeat. Only the shock of the Tsusima disaster deepened a growing sense of imminent danger to the State, and caused the Zemstvo men to assemble hastily again in July, and to send a deputation to the Emperor, to implore him to put an end to the bureaucatic system and establish representative government. Up till then there had been on the part of the Government only a few faint signs of reluctant yielding, vague promises, the appointment of Commissions to draft reforms. In reply to the Zemstvo deputation (June 19th) the Tsar said definitely: "My will, the will of the Emperor to convene a National Assembly, is unshakable. I am daily watching over this. My will shall be carried out."

Ten days afterwards Odessa was the scene of a naval mutiny. Workmen struck, crowds of wharf-labourers burned down goods-sheds, stores and country houses. There were sanguinary conflicts with the troops. The space around the harbour was covered with a smoking heap of ruins. Then up over the blue sunlit expanse of waters, across which argonauts had once sailed in search of the Golden Fleece, a battleship came swiftly steaming. The battleship, the *Prince Potemkin*, was in charge of a mutinous crew. They cast anchor before the city and warned the authorities to refrain from interfering with the burial of their comrade who had been killed by an officer. Their comrade was buried, and thousands of the inhabitants of Odessa attended the funeral. Three or four of the sailors were arrested. The *Potemkin* fired shots into the city and the sailors were released. The mutiny spread to two other vessels. The mutineers held the authorities paralysed. The Admiral commanding the Black Sea fleet came up with the rest of the squadron, but

did not venture to take strong measures. The *Potemkin*, after taking provisions left Odessa and put in at Constanza in Roumania. Here she was disarmed, and most of the mutineers, after aimless wanderings in foreign lands, one by one returned to Russia, drawn by invincible home-sickness, and were seized and punished, some by death, and some by exile.

There were mutinies in Libau and Kronstadt and political strikes; bomb-throwing and demonstrations did not cease throughout the land. On August 9th an Imperial Decree was promulgated constituting a National Representative Assembly with Consultative Powers. But this concession did not check the growing agitation. The war came to an end. The Peace of Portsmouth was concluded in August. When M. Witte after signing it returned to Russia he was the man of the hour. He received the title of Count, and united all the Ministers in a Cabinet of which be became the first Premier. The unrest grew, and toward the end of October culminated in a general strike of a character unparalleled. The final impetus was given by the St. Petersburg railway-men, who struck by mistake in consequence of the receipt of false information from Moscow. The strike spread to all the railways of the Empire. On all that network of lines which maintains communication between the ends of the great plain traffic came to a standstill. Trains stopped at wayside stations. Passengers bivouacked or pursued their journey in hired carriages. The busy hum and thunderous rattle of the great city stations, their pride in the conquest of distance yielded suddenly to a chilly, faint-hearted silence. One by one porters, newsboys, book-keepers, ticket-clerks crept away. Cab-drivers deserted their ranks before the stations, disconsolate, to seek chance fares at street corners. At such a moment it was a simple and natural thing that the factory employees should strike once more. Agitation and persuasion were hardly needed. And the strange impulse spread, the impulse to cease from all action, to refrain even

from such support of the old system as was involved in the earning of one's bread, till the word of change should come. Shop assistants put on their coats and went wandering aimlessly up and down the streets in search of liberty. The clerks in city offices laid aside their pens and waited. Teachers ceased to teach, and school children had unexpected holidays. Lawyers ceased to plead, and even unemotional city magistrates were infected by the strange unrest and ceased to judge between landlords and tenants, or to pass sentence on the drunk and disorderly until the word of a new time had been spoken. The provision shops remained open and the people ate and drank. But all the myriad currents of effort and emotion which constitute the daily life of a great city had been suddenly simplified, reduced to one single emotion of silent expectancy, menacing because of its vastness, because of its amazing spontaneity. Organisation played only the most trifling part in the strike. It was the spontaneous expression of a general desire, perhaps possible in such a form only in a country where industry and the business of living generally are loosely organised. There was something awe-inspiring in this strange negative assertion of the general will.

Cossacks uneasily patrolled the streets of St. Petersburg. No one knew how long the strange silence would last or what it portended. The University building was crowded night after night with people eager to hear fitting words for the strange emotions that were oppressing them. The floors of the University groaned under the weight of the packed masses; the students joined hands and formed living barriers to guide the surging stream up staircases and along corridors. Revolutionary songs were sung, but they left perplexity and fear hanging in the air. The police were helpless. Arrests were of no avail. Who could arrest this vast emotion?

On the third evening of the strike, that is, on October 30th, news came from Tsarskoe Selo and was telegraphed abroad. The Tsar had granted a Constitution. He had signed a

manifesto declaring that no law should be valid without the consent of the Duma, and affirming the principles of liberty of speech, of the Press, of assembly and association, and also the principle of personal immunity. The news was known abroad before it was generally known in St. Petersburg. In the evening a few copies of the Manifesto were distributed. Towards midnight a faint sound of singing broke the brooding silence of the Nevsky. The Cossack patrols reined up their horses in vague alarm. A little procession of students came marching down the Prospect, doubting and wondering wayfarers joined them, Cossack patrols formed a cautious and puzzled escort. The procession crossed the bridge and approached the dimly looming mass of the University buildings. Out of the darkness of the University square Cossacks came galloping and checked the march. A police officer appeared and forbade entrance to the University. A student handed him a copy of the Manifesto. In the glimmering light of a street-lamp, vaguely revealing the Cossacks leaning down from their saddles and the thin pale faces of students, both men and women, the police officer read in a hard, dry voice the Manifesto. "Liberty of speech" was one of the phrases he read, and then he opened the door of the University Courtyard, the students entered, somebody made a speech, there was cheering, and the little company dispersed.

A Constitution Granted.

Next day the city gave itself over to rejoicing, a strange morbid kind of rejoicing that was full of bitterness and foreboding. There were endless processions with red flags, and the interminable singing of the Russian revolutionary Marseillaise, open-air meetings, fierce ejaculations, speeches bitter and resentful, never simply joyful, sighs of relief that the immediate tension was over, but no powerful controlling voice, no leader to gather up all the vague, diffuse popular emotion of the troubled time, to illuminate it, to direct it, and make it the motive force of the new era just proclaimed in the Imperial Manifesto. In default of a popular leader

there was a disposition on the part of many to look to Count Witte for guidance. But the Zemstvo men, the recognised heads of the Constitutional movement, did not trust him. He had to form a Cabinet of Government officials, he was caught in the toils of bureaucratic tradition, and before he had time to give effect to the principles of the Manifesto found himself plunged into a systematic policy of repression, the agent of which was the Minister of the Interior, Durnovo. There was a period of irresolution, of halting between liberty and oppression. In Kiev, Odessa, and other towns mobs, aided by the soldiery, carried out terrible massacres of Jews and intelligentsia. But in the Capitals, the Press was free, and a Council of Workmen's Deputies, which sat in St. Petersburg, wielded for a time an extraordinary authority. Then the members of this Council were arrested and the Press was checked. In the Baltic Provinces Lettish workmen and peasants killed German landlords, and again and again lit up a whole country-side with the lurid light of burning mansions, bringing down at the end of the year terrible retribution in the form of punitive expeditions. In Moscow revolutionary groups threw up barricades in the streets, and for several days lived in enjoyment of the virtual command over half the city. At midday daily heavy guns were laboriously dragged up to demolish the barricades, and to make ugly holes in houses where revolutionaries were supposed to be lodged. The revolt was quelled by a regiment sent from St. Petersburg, and punitive expeditions did their merciless work along the railway lines in the neighbourhood of Moscow. There were other revolts here and there, provisional so-called republics were established in various towns, to be quickly followed by the terrors of punitive expeditions, improvised from among the troops returning from the war. The winter dragged on wearily and heavily, but preparations were made for the elections to the Duma. Parties were organised. An electoral law giving the peasantry the preponderance of voting powers was issued in March, and on the eve of the

assembling of the Duma, the principles of the October Manifesto were embodied in revised Fundamental Laws. The elections returned a majority of Constitutional Democrats or Cadets (so-called from the first letters of their title K D), members of a party formed by a fusion of the leading group of the Zemstvo Congress with groups of professional men in the towns. There were also a large number of peasants, most of whom joined a Labour Party which was organised in the Duma. The Conservative and the Reactionary elements in the country were almost unrepresented.

The First Parliament.

On a sunny May morning the Emperor received the members of the first Russian Parliament in the great white hall of the Winter Palace. On one side of the hall were ranged the deputies, stern and sober, a few in frock-coats, many in jackets, and the great majority of the peasants in simple peasant costume. Opposite them were ranged courtiers, generals and admirals, ministers, members of the Senate and the Council of State, all gleaming in scarlet uniforms and gold lace. The Emperor read an address in which he called the deputies " the best men " of the country. The courtiers and dignitaries cheered lustily, and a band played the National Anthem. But the deputies looked on gloomily, and the peasants calculated how much of the people's money had been spent in the purchase of all the splendid uniforms. The first hostile note of the session was struck there in the Winter Palace. The attempt to reconcile the new institution with the traditional order failed from the outset.

The deputies went by steamer up the sunlit river to the Taurida Palace. A cheering crowd welcomed them at the gates. In the hall of session, arranged in the form of an amphitheatre, peasants, professors, landowners, and lawyers noisily and exultingly took their seats, and in the afternoon light, reflected through great windows from a garden jubilant in its spring garment of green, they elected as their Speaker a dignified professor from Moscow named Muromtsev, and

listened to a short speech in which the veteran Zemstvo leader Petrunkevich demanded as the pledge of complete reconciliation between the Government and the nation a full amnesty for all political offenders.

For seventy-two days the First Duma sat and debated in the Taurida Palace. This period was one of open and declared hostility between the Government and the Representative Assembly. There was no moderating element on either side. The Witte Cabinet had retired just before the opening of the Duma, giving place to a Cabinet under the premiership of an elderly and inactive dignitary named Goremykin, who represented bureaucratic tradition pure and simple. In the Parliament the Cadets, who in themselves represented liberal and democratic constructive tendencies, were continually overborne, and if not out-voted, were outvoiced by the more domonstrative violent and aggressive left wing of the Duma, the Labour and Socialist groups. The appearance of Ministers in the Duma was the signal for fierce attacks on the Government. The peasantry, the nationalities, clamoured for immediate satisfaction of their demands. The fine promenade hall of the Taurida Palace, once a ballroom, now a parliamentary lobby, was continually ahum with disputes between peasants, workmen, journalists and lawyers on land nationalisation, women's franchise, or the claims of the proletariat. And apart from disputes there was a burning desire for mere intercourse, an eagerness to compare notes, exchange experiences, to revel in a new sense of kinship, brotherhood, unity, to interpret the political and geographical unity of the Empire in a passionate expression of national unity in the task of liberation. But there was no real unity after all. The party spirit grew apace, the deputies vented their passion on each other, and the resounding echoes of the Duma's attacks on the bureaucracy confusedly mingled with the sharp tones of bitter party strife. The people looked to the Duma for relief. Wild-looking peasants from remote governments came up to the Duma with fantastic schemes for saving the

THE IMPERIAL DUMA

Empire. But the Duma was helpless. It did not succeed in affirming in Acts of Parliament even the most elementary principles of civil liberty. And yet scores of Socialist organs all over the country violently attacked it for failing at once to bring the millenium. In the end the Government simply dissolved the Duma. The majority of the deputies went to Viborg in Finland, and thence issued an appeal to the people to defend their rights by refusing to pay taxes or give recruits to the army. This act proved to be a deplorable political blunder from which the Cadets in particular reaped bitter consequences. No response was made by the country to the Viborg appeal, and the new head of the Government, Stolypin, who, having ventured as Minister of the Interior to recommend the dissolution of the Duma, had been appointed Premier with the injunction to carry the dissolution into effect, engaged in a policy of repression even more energetic than that conducted by M. Durnovo.

M. Stolypin.

The name of Stolypin stands for a very distinctly marked and characteristic period of recent Russian history. This period, lasting from July 21st, 1906, when Stolypin became Premier till September, 1911, when he was assassinated in Kiev, may be described as the period of the reassertion of the bureaucratic will. M. Stolypin probably did not aim definitely at the complete restoration of the bureaucracy. He was not a thorough bureaucrat by training or conviction. He was a country gentleman and a provincial governor, and had had no experience of the intricate ways of the St. Petersburg Chancelleries until he was summoned from Saratov to be Minister of the Interior in the Goremykin Cabinet. He was not a man of theory; there is no reason to believe that he was an anti-constitutionalist in principle, and he was certainly not a devotee of bureaucratic tradition. His main object was to hold the Empire together under particularly trying circumstances. He refused to see perplexities, and tried to cut a Gordian knot. He took a simple view of the strange, confused emotion that was agitating the country. He summed

it all up as revolutionary, and proceeded to put it down. Agrarian disturbances, terrorism, those forms of highway robbery or expropriation into which the extreme forms of revolutionary activity had degenerated, he suppressed by the ruthless methods of the Field Court-Martial. Executions became a normal feature of public life in a country in which capital punishment has no place in the Criminal Code.

Stolypin had a second Duma elected, but the Second Duma proved to be as uncompromising as the First, and far less capable. The Premier brought about its dissolution, and in spite of the provisions of the Constitution that no law should be valid without the consent of the Duma, the electoral law was changed by Imperial decree, so as to transfer the preponderance of voting power from the peasantry to the landed gentry. In the Third Duma, elected on the basis of the new law, the Constitutional Democrats numbered less than three score, the Labour and Socialist parties which had been so prominent in the first two Dumas were represented by a mere handful, while the majority consisted of Conservative and Reactionary groups. The Centre was formed by a party of Conservative Constitutionalists known as Octobrists, who hovered dexterously on the borderline between Constitutionalism and Bureaucracy.

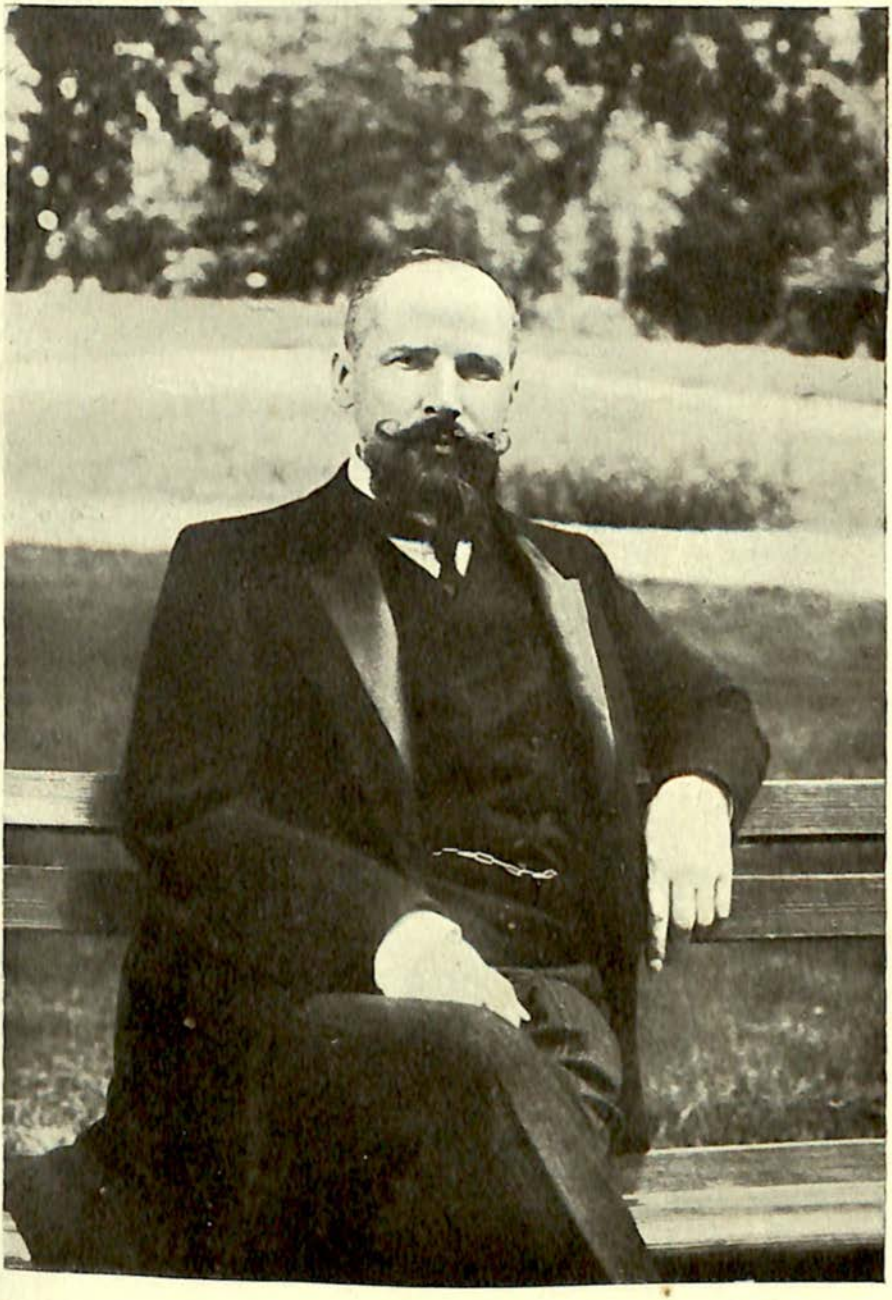
For five years the Third Duma contrived to maintain a shadowy existence in virtue of a curious policy of hide-and-seek which the Octobrists, as represented by their leader, the Moscow deputy, Guchkov, amicably played with the Government, as represented by Stolypin. Both Stolypin and Guchkov were men of spirit, but the effect of their co-operation was to make the Duma a byword in the country for spiritless compliance. It was characteristic of the Third Duma that whenever it ventured clearly to assert a constitutional principle it always surrendered it the moment the assertion seemed to involve the danger of serious conflict with the Government. But the cringing of the Third Duma had a certain advantage. By bowing before the vehement

reassertion of bureaucratic and reactionary principle, it prevented that total abolition of representative institutions which again and again seemed inevitable. It established for the representative assembly a certain tradition, a certain customary right of existence. And that meant a great deal at a moment when the nation, ill-organised, divided against itself and yet eager to abolish the old system, was unable to give effect to its desire. Perhaps the Third Duma was the measure of the nation's actual strength. But while the Duma examined the budget and passed various bills of secondary importance—whatever progressive principles they contained being afterwards almost invariably eliminated by the Upper House, the Council of the Empire—the greater part of the Empire remained under martial law, all the acts of the administration were an ostentatious denial of the principles of civil liberty, the evils of the bureaucratic system made themselves felt with redoubled intensity—in fact the Bureaucracy assumed a new aggressive character largely owing to the force of Stolypin's personality, the strength of his will.

It was a strange position. Stolypin placed himself, his energy, his decision of character, his freedom from hampering bureaucratic routine at the service of the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy acquired in him what it most needed, a will. He tried to suppress the popular movement, and at the same time to reinvigorate the bureaucracy by cleansing it of some of its worst abuses, such as the wholesale taking of bribes. He needed the Duma, in fact the Duma was indispensable to him. His prestige was largely based on the fact that in the Representative Assembly he appeared before the public eye. He was a fine, vigorous-looking man, with black beard square shoulders and a determined glance. And he was an excellent public speaker. He needed the Duma. Yet he constantly discouraged the Duma's constitutional aspirations. And as the years passed he tended to identify himself more and more closely with the bureaucratic tradition, and in so doing he lost his vigour, his initiative, that very energy of

volition which made him so valuable to the supporters of the older system. He was defeated again and again on questions of primary importance by the extreme reactionary elements, but he remained at his post. He had in fact lost his real power before he was assassinated by Bogrov in September, 1911. And the very manner of his death revealed in a striking and tragical form an abuse which had assumed far-reaching dimensions during the period of Stolypin's premiership. The assassin, Bogrov, was an agent of the Secret Police, whose duty it was to protect exalted personages against terrorist attacks. In combating the revolutionary movement the Secret Police had been in the habit of employing *agents provocateurs*, who associated with the revolutionaries, learned their secrets, helped them to organise their plots, and at the same time kept the police informed, so that at the critical moment the conspirators could be arrested. The case of a notorious agent provocateur named Azev, who had for years been a member of the Social Revolutionary Committee and, while serving the Secret Police had aided in the assassination of the Minister of the Interior, Plehve, and the Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovich, had been the subject of an interpellation in the Duma. Stolypin did not put a stop to this practice even after the Azev exposure, and in the end he himself became its victim. It was a tragic end to a strange career, the most striking political career of recent times in Russia.

The Third Duma drifted peacefully to its appointed term, and was dissolved in August, 1912. The Fourth Duma, which assembled in October, was in most essentials a mere copy of its predecessor, and for the present it is carrying on a passive policy of marking time and waiting for things to turn up. And in a sense it may be said that the whole country is waiting, that the Government itself is waiting and wondering ; nowhere does there seem to be a clear, definite aim. The revolutionary movement has been long since suppressed, there appears to be no object for the bureaucracy to expend its repressive energy on. There is a constant,



M. STOLYPIN
(*Late President of the Council of Ministers*)

irritating, petty persecution of individuals, groups and institutions, and the inhibition on public initiative has not been relaxed. And, on the other hand, there is an upward movement in commerce and industry. Several years of good harvests have restored the economic balance of the country. Apart from politics a steady process of Westernisation is going on. A measure introduced by Stolypin, providing for the gradual break-up of the village commune and the acquirement by individual peasants of the proprietory rights over their allotments of the communal land, has led to profound changes in the rural districts, the exact bearing of which it is yet early to determine. Life is going its own ways, changing its forms independently of politics. The years of tumult have affected so far only a slight change in the political system, but they have brought about a tremendous change in the mental attitude of the people. A certain *naïveté*, a patriarchal simplicity of outlook has passed away. The Russian has suffered bitter disappointment and disillusionment, and for better or worse he is becoming a modern man. And yet the Imperial problem is not solved, the period of transition is not yet over. The immense task of transforming into the highly complex unity of a vigorous modern national organism, the outward and simple political unity that has been attained as the result of the gradual conquest of the great plain, is only half accomplished. And those who are interested in the welfare of the Russian people can only earnestly hope that the process may be completed without further catastrophe.

Survey of Recent Political Struggles.

The result of the struggles of the last few years is that Russia now has an Imperial Legislative Assembly, existing side by side with the bureaucracy, but unable to exert a thoroughgoing control. The present system bears a transitional character. The Duma is tolerated, but frequently ignored. The menace of dissolution hangs over it constantly, but the Duma has weathered seven extremely difficult years,

and threats of its abolition and the complete restoration of the autocracy are less frequently heard than they used to be. It is hard to find a term to describe the present regime. In official documents the word "Autocrat" is retained. Stolypin avoided the word "Constitution," and spoke of the "reformed" or "renovated system," and sometimes of the "representative system." Perhaps the existing state of affairs might be called a bureaucracy slightly tempered by constitutionalism. At any rate there is a Duma, a Parliament in Russia, and this fact is in itself immensely important as a symbol of achievement and a pledge of progress. The Duma is enveloped in grey mists of disappointment. It can accomplish little. Its wishes, even its most modest wishes for reform are thwarted. It is deferential, self-effacing. It shrinks from asserting in any pronounced form its privileges and powers. It has cultivated the art of self-protection by mimicry; it has assumed to a large extent the colour of its bureaucratic environment. But even so the Duma represents a principle of government absolutely distinct from that of the bureaucracy, and its mere existence is a gain, an advance. The Duma means that Russia has finally emerged from her isolation, that she has definitely come into Europe, and that whatever happens there can be no return to the past. When even China has adopted a Constitution the world has clearly grown too small to permit of Russian bureaucratic exclusiveness.

The Duma Described.

The Duma is composed of 442 members, elected from all parts of the Empire, with the exception of Central Asia. It is thus much smaller than the British Parliament with its 670 members, although it directly represents a population of 150 millions as compared with the 44 millions represented in the House of Commons. The great majority of the deputies are Russians. By the new electoral law, promulgated in 1907, after the dissolution of the Second Duma, the number of deputies from non-Russian regions was greatly reduced. The result is that

while a central, purely Russian government like Kursk, with a population of two and a half millions returns eleven deputies, and Tambov, with a population of three millions returns twelve, Poland, with its eleven millions sends fourteen, of whom two must be Russians, and Transcaucasia, with its six and a quarter millions sends seven deputies, of whom one must be a Russian. The Duma is elected for five years, and one Duma, the Third, lived out its full term. The electoral system is complex, and in the large cities the electors are divided into two classes according to property qualification. Thus St. Petersburg returns six members, of whom three are elected by the first class, or curia, and three by the second. In the second class the qualification is occupancy of an apartment or flat which gives a fairly wide and democratic franchise. The first class includes wealthy property owners, and naturally tends to be far more conservative than the second. Moscow returns four members, two from the first and two from the second class. Kiev and Odessa return one member from each class, and in Warsaw the dividing factor is not a property but a national line, the small Russian population being in one class, the Poles and Jews in the other. The electoral system in the cities is fairly simple, but while in St. Petersburg and Moscow the voting is direct, that is to say, voters simply elect their deputies, in Warsaw it is indirect, that is, voters elect electors who in their turn elect the deputy. Outside the big cities the system of indirect voting is developed to such an extent as to make elections resemble walking through a labyrinth. All sorts of groups first meet at different points in a government or province to elect electors, then some of these electors elect other electors in their turn, and finally the electors who remain after the straining process has been completed assemble in the head town of the government and elect the requisite number of deputies. In the final elections in the government town there are all kinds of rivalries and combinations between the various groups of big landowners and small landowners, priests and townsmen and

peasants, all these group interests being intersected by party and personal interests, and the whole complicated by the administrative pressure which is exercised through all stages of the elections. It is a strange process. The vote of the sturdy peasant Ivan Ivanov is reduced to the faintest echo of itself by the time that it has passed through all the stages of its delegated progress, through the cantonal meeting, and right up to the government assembly. After all, the system is so calculated that, in the end, the big landowners are almost certain to secure a majority, and the peasants returned are usually those who seem to the landowners fairly safe. So it happens that while the towns generally return Progressives and the working-class communities Socialists, the provinces return Conservatives of various shades, from the Conservative Constitutionalists, or Octobrists, to the Reactionaries of the Extreme Right. Russia being an agricultural country, with towns few and far between, the conservatives under such conditions inevitably secure a majority and the Progressives, forming the Opposition remain in a perpetual minority.

The Duma, being a new institution, is naturally formed on foreign models, and there is nothing particularly Russian about it except that pretty Taurida Palace on the outskirts of St. Petersburg in which it meets. The German arrangement of parties prevails, the Conservatives sitting to the right of the Speaker, and Liberals and Socialists to the left. Right and Left thus connote political ideas, the Extreme Right being Reactionaries and the Extreme Left Socialists, while any tendency in a conservative or progressive direction is described as a movement from left to right, or from right to left, as the case may be. The parties themselves, Cadets or Octobrists, for instance, may be divided into Right and Left Wings ; thus if the Octobrists are Conservative Constitutionalists, a right Octobrist will be more conservative than constitutionalist, and a left Octobrist more constitutionalist than conservative. To say that a deputy is "righting"

means that he is getting more conservative in his views: to say that he is "lefting" means that he is growing more radical. Left and Right are the political epithets most frequently applied in Russia, and are very conveniently elastic in their application at a moment when parties are many, and normal conditions of party life have not yet been established.

The business of the Duma is conducted by a body called, as in Germany, the Praesidium, and consisting of a President, or Speaker, two deputy Speakers, and a Secretary with his assistants, who are all elected annually from among the deputies. The apportionment of these offices among the various parties causes a great deal of heartburning and strife. The order of business is arranged by the Praesidium in conjunction with the leaders of the parties grouped in an informal body known for a long time under the German name of Seniorenconvent, but now described by a Russian term meaning "Council of Elders." The President sits aloft in a kind of box or tribune, and the Secretaries in smaller boxes just in front of him. Deputies speak, not from their places, but from a tribune in front of and a little lower than that of the President. The Deputies are seated in an amphitheatre, the various sectors of which from right to left are apportioned to various parties. Parliamentary officials called pristavs, distinguished by chains like those of aldermen, attend to technical details such as the admission of visitors, the counting of votes, and the distribution of papers. Ministers and Assistant Ministers, when they come to Parliament, sit in a box to the Speaker's right. The Press has one box in the hall of sitting and another upstairs; there is a roomy visitors' gallery, an Imperial Box in which one of the Grand Dukes sometimes sits, and a Diplomatic Box. A splendid promenade hall called the Catherine Hall, now serves the purposes of a lobby, various rooms are reserved for committees and party purposes. In the summer months the deputies relieve the tedium of long sittings by wandering about in that part of

the Taurida Park which is fenced off for the Parliament, or row in a little boat on a miniature lake. The Taurida Palace is under the command of a general of gendarmes.

In the appearance of the deputies there is little to strike the eye. The First and Second Dumas which were more democratic and represented a greater number of national types than their successors, displayed a picturesque variety of costume and feature. Now the monotony of ordinary European frock-coats and jackets is only relieved by the cassocks of the priests, by the kaftans of a few of the peasants, and the skull-caps and long coats of one or two of the Tartar deputies. Most of the faces are of an average Russian cast, but on the left there are Poles and Tartars, and on the extreme left a few swarthy Armenian and Georgian faces, while towards the right there are bulky landowners from the backwoods with thick lips and protruding lower jaw. The deputies receive a salary of 4,000 roubles (£400) a year. Some of the wealthy landowners come down to the House in their own motor-cars or private carriages, but the majority come on foot or in cheap cabs, or in a shabby little horse-car that maintains a limp connection with the centre of the city. Outwardly the Duma is becoming assimilated to bureaucratic St. Petersburg and has, it must be admitted, grown to be rather a dreary and despondent place.

There are a number of parties in the Duma, so many in fact, and so loosely organised, that majorities are perpetually wobbling, and there are constant surprises and catch votes. The Government refuses to legalise the Opposition parties, so that outside the Duma they have no officially recognised standing, though the existence of a Cadet or Constitutional Democratic Party is to a limited extent tolerated. On the extreme right is the Party of the Right, composed of various representatives of reactionary organisations. This party stands theoretically for the repeal of the Constitution and the complete restoration of the Autocracy, but its members have sat for five years in one Duma, and seem likely to sit

for five years in another, so that the pleasant habit of being members of parliament seems to be gaining ground on their anti-constitutionalist theories. Their leaders, the Kursk deputies Purishkevich and Markov, have gained imperial notoriety for their use of vituperative language, and the name Purishkevich is used by peasants even in the Northern Caucasus as an extremely offensive epithet. The Right maintain a reactionary agitation throughout the country, are in league with the police, and represent the most obscure and the most obscurantist side of the bureaucracy. It would be hard to find among the Duma Right idealists of reaction, for the most part it is a singularly crude and materialist type of reactionary that is here represented. Their strength lies solely in the prevalence of reaction in the bureaucracy.

Next to the Right come the Nationalists, who represent Stolypin's attempt to form a Government Party. While the Right is composed chiefly of peasants, priests and country gentlemen, the Nationalist Party is composed chiefly of country gentlemen and Government officials, with a sprinkling of priests to whom the extreme coarseness of the Right is distasteful. The party was influential during Stolypin's lifetime, but is losing its importance, and has split into two groups. What the Nationalists stand for politically it is difficult to say, except that they vehemently assert the necessity of maintaining and increasing restrictions on the non-Russian nationalities. But they are a party of moods, and in the main they simply constitute one of the parliamentary outposts of the bureaucracy. One of the Nationalist deputies, M. Shulgin, from the Kiev government, is the ablest and most logical speaker on the Right side of the House.

Then come the Octobrists, who constitute the Centre, and held the balance of power in the Third Duma. The party takes its name from the October Constitutionalist Manifesto, stands for constitutional government, and has made a long and painful experiment in establishing the foundations of

constitutional government by co-operation with the bureaucracy. The party is composed mainly of country gentlemen of a conservative temperament who are strongly averse from radical and violent measures, but are desirous of seeing constitutional principles put into force. Such a party is clearly unfitted to play a heroic part in a critical epoch; but in the Third Duma it had a vigorous leader in the person of M. Guchkov, who pursued a very intricate and interesting policy. M. Guchkov comes of a Moscow merchant family of Old Believers, and is a keen sportsman, with a love of adventure, of fighting for its own sake. He fought with the Boers in the Transvaal War, and worked with the Red Cross in the Manchurian War and in the Balkans. He was one of the founders of the Octobrist Party, and an open supporter of the Government policy of suppressing the revolutionary movement by summary and violent measures. He was among the public men whom Stolypin consulted after the dissolution of the First Duma with the view to their becoming members of the Cabinet, and who refused on learning the conditions. M. Guchkov's political career actually began when he was elected deputy from Moscow in the Third Duma, and became leader of the Octobrist party. The position was an exceedingly difficult one, and M. Guchkov thought that the only hope lay in gradually permeating the government with a constitutionalist leaven. Stolypin in those days was disposed to effect certain obviously necessary reforms, and he and Guchkov agreed to work together. Guchkov making heavy concessions on the Duma's part on condition that Stolypin would protect the Duma against the restorationists and gradually introduce reforms. Theoretically the bargain was a sound one, and one result of it was that the Duma did tide over a very difficult and dangerous period, and evaded premature dissolution. But Stolypin was forced back by the extreme reactionaries from point to point, and was unable to carry out the promised reforms. His repressive measures remained in force, and there was not a glimmer

A. I. GUCHKOV
(*Octobrist Leader*)

of constitutional liberty. Guchkov, again, was very indifferently backed by the bulk of his own party, which understood the policy of constantly throwing a sop to Cerberus much better than an active policy of permeation and penetration of bureaucratic strongholds. Guchkov was forced to make very heavy concessions, and openly to identify himself with highly unpopular and unconstitutional measures. Then Stolypin went to the Right, broke with the Octobrists, and in the days when his personal energy and political power were fading formed the party of the Nationalists. For a time Guchkov was President of the Third Duma, and in the position tried to pursue his chosen policy more effectively. He spoke rarely in the Duma, but when he did his speeches were always impressive, and his words carefully chosen. "We are waiting," was the closing phrase of one of his best-known speeches, and this phrase was characteristic of his party's attitude. Guchkov's policy kept the Third Duma going, or rather kept it from going into the limbo into which its predecessors had gone. But the injury to the Duma's dignity and value was grave—history never fails to demand a heavy price, moral and material, for every achievement in Russia—and M. Guchkov suffered personally for his close identification with the policy of the Government and it cost him his seat in Moscow. He was not elected to the Fourth Duma, and is at present engaged in municipal politics in St. Petersburg. M. Guchkov represents an unusual combination of the business man and the intelligent, and his interest in affairs is constantly interwoven with his interest in ideas, and reinforced by an unfailing spirit of enterprise.

Other prominent members of the Octobrist Party are M. Rodzianko of Ekaterinoslav, a giant of a man with a resonant bass voice, the owner of immense estates, a Court Chamberlain and a persistent defender of the ceremonial rights and privileges of the Duma on public occasions. M. Rodzianko was President of the Third Duma during the last year of its existence, and was elected President of the Fourth Duma;

the former President of the Third Duma, M. Nicholas Homiakov, the son of a famous Slavophil poet, a shrewd and witty country gentleman, who might easily occupy a distinguished position if his energy were proportionate to his talent ; and M. Shidlovsky, a Conservative Constitutionalist of a clear-cut and very conscientious type, and a lucid and able speaker. Baron Meyendorff, of Livland, a scrupulous and unbending opponent of all forms of illegality, and one of the ablest and most conspicuous Octobrists in the Third Duma, has left the party owing to disapproval of its support of the Government's Finnish policy.

To the Left of the Octobrists is the Opposition, composed of four parties and the Mohammedan and Polish groups. The Polish group, composed of conservative deputies from Poland and Lithuania, drags out a melancholy and undistinguished existence in a Duma in which Russian Nationalism is militant: It once had an aggressive and conspicuous leader in the person of M. Roman Dmowski of Warsaw, but since his retirement the group has rarely attracted attention. A handful of Mohammedan deputies represent the Tartars of the Volga, the Urals and the Caucasus, and bear a heavy burden in defence of their confessional and educational interests.

Between the Octobrists and the next large party, the Cadets, sit the Progressists, pacific Constitutionalists who object to Octobrist tactics on the one hand, and to various points in the Cadet programme on the other. Its most prominent members are M. Nicholas Lvov, a Vice-President of the Fourth Duma, a Zemstvo Constitutionalist, a chivalrous and passionate speaker, and a Hamlet in his incapacity for action ; M. Konovalov, a young and active Moscow merchant, and the party leader, M. Efremov, an ardent Pacifist.

The Cadets, or Constitutional Democrats, are a fairly large group, numbering from fifty to sixty deputies, and now occupy the position of leaders of the Opposition in the Duma and in the country. This is sorry comfort for the loss of the

leadership of the first two Dumas, and the conduct of an Opposition policy under the present conditions is the most trying and thankless task that could be imagined. The Cadets represent Constitutionalism in its undiluted and unmodified form, and maintain a clear and strict line of demarcation between themselves and the bureaucracy. Their speeches are as a matter of necessity mainly devoted to criticisms of Government methods and exposures of administrative abuses, and as the party includes the most powerful speakers in the Duma the attacks and exposures of the Cadets are as thoroughly effective as speeches can be which year after year find the same abuses to attack, unmodified and unmitigated. The Cadet Party has had a strange history. Formed at the end of 1905, through the fusion of the Zemstvo Constitutionalists with leaders of the professional classes in the towns, it drafted a programme of democratic and constitutional reform which attracted for it wide sympathy. The party was admirably organised, established branches in all parts of the Empire, had its programme translated into all the languages of the Empire, and secured a large majority in the elections to the First Duma. There was a moment when it seemed possible that Cadets would be summoned to form a Cabinet. But a lack of firmness in resisting the pressure of the more headstrong Labour and Socialist Left in the First Duma proved fatal. After the dissolution of the First Duma the Cadets took the leading part in the drafting of the Viborg Manifesto, which cannot now be justified on any political grounds. Many of the ablest members of the Party signed the Manifesto, and in consequence not only did they suffer three months' imprisonment, but what is much more serious, were permanently deprived of the franchise. This was the case with the veteran Zemstvo Constitutionalist, M. Ivan Petrunkevich of Tver, one of the most attractive figures in Russian public life, a man of profound Liberal principle and ripe experience, and a courageous assertor of constitutional principles during the long period of reaction

in the eighties and nineties. This was the case, too, with M. Nabokov, the son of one of Alexander II's ministers, whose eloquence and business capacity as displayed in the First Duma, seemed to give promise of an exceptionally distinguished political career. And this was the case with scores of others who signed the appeal.

The party became the object of unremitting Government hostilities. It was refused official authorisation. Its meetings were declared illegal, its organisation, as far as possible, broken up. It has not held a congress for years. In the Second Duma it again secured a majority, including such able men as MM. Maklakov and Struve, but the change in the Electoral Law in 1907 robbed it of its preponderance of voting power, and it came up to the Third Duma a comparatively small group to face a strong majority which was favourable to the Government. At present the Cadet deputies are returned chiefly by the cities and large towns. Both St. Petersburg and Moscow return Cadets, and there are a few Cadet representatives from the rural districts.

The leader of the Cadets, M. Paul Miliukov, has set the stamp of his personality very strongly upon the party. Born somewhere over fifty years ago, educated in Moscow, he became a lecturer in history in the Moscow University, and published a number of valuable works on Russian History. He was popular as a lecturer, but was frequently harassed by the police on account of his liberal views, and was compelled to give up his post at the University. In the nineties the young Principality of Bulgaria invited him to organise the State College of Sofia on University lines, and in Sofia M. Miliukov spent several years making that thorough study of the Balkans which afterwards made him the most competent authority on Balkan politics amongst Russian public men. Returning to St. Petersburg he for some years led the life of a *littérateur*, took part in the Liberal movement, was a prominent member of the Liberation League, the leaders of which were the Zemstvo Constitutionalists, and on returning

from Chicago, where in 1905 he gave a series of lectures on the Russian crisis, he threw himself into the work of politically organising the professions in the towns and linking up these new professional unions with the Zemstvo Liberal organisations. He was one of the chief initiators of the Constitutional Democratic Party which was founded in Moscow at the moment of the promulgation of the Constitution. He was not a member of the First or Second Dumas, though he was constantly active behind the scenes. In 1907 he was elected member for St. Petersburg by a heavy vote, and retained his position at the elections to the Fourth Duma. The general tactics of the Cadet Party were largely determined by his influence, and for the last few years he has steadily borne the brunt of the parliamentary conflict as Opposition leader in a time of reaction. M. Miliukov has a capacity for work and a tenacity of purpose exceptional among Russian public men, and therein lies his strength as a leader. He is an *intelligent* with no experience in affairs except what he has gained in recent years, and this explains to a considerable extent both his defects and his qualities. He has a wide knowledge of European politics, and is an able and resourceful speaker. The mistakes he makes—serious ones, sometimes at critical moments—are those that academic men do make when they overreach themselves in trying to be practical. But M. Miliukov's most characteristic and admirable feature is a sort of downright doggedness. Guchkov and Miliukov, the chief rival party leaders of the present period, are much less unlike than differences in tactics and in views on current question make them seem. They both have a large share of that hard bedrock sense which may be distinctly Muscovite, and has at any rate meant a great deal in the process of Russian state-building.

Other leading members of the Cadet Party in the Duma are M. Vasili Maklakov, a Moscow lawyer, brother of the present Minister of the Interior, the most talented, logical and forceful speaker in the House, whose speeches are always

looked forward to as an event; M. Rodichev, a Zemstvo worker from Tver, and a fiery and passionate orator upon whose talent the years in the heavy atmosphere of the Third Duma have had a depressing effect; M. Shingarev, a Zemstvo doctor from Voronezh, who in the course of a few years of hard work in the Duma has gained an expert knowledge of Imperial finance; and the Secretary of the Second Duma, M. Chelnokov of Moscow. The Cadet Party is the best disciplined in the House.

The Labour Party, which was so strongly represented in the First and Second Dumas, has constituted in the Third and Fourth an insignificant group with no leaders to compare with Zhilkin, Aladin and Anikin, who enjoyed such authority in the First Duma.

The Social Democrats number about twenty, of whom several are working men. They deny the legislative value of the Duma as at present constituted, and use its tribune as a medium for protesting against the present regime, but by the mere habit of constantly partaking in its sittings they are imperceptibly drawn into legislative work like their enemies the reactionaries at the opposite end of the Chamber. In spite of their small numbers and their lack of good speakers—M. Chheidze, a Georgian from the Caucasus, is the best—they succeed in maintaining a very consistent protest. In doing so they are aided by the Social Democratic organisations outside the Duma, which in defiance of police restrictions and repression carries on a persistent agitation amongst the working-men, and keeps two little papers going in spite of daily fines.

Party lines are sharply drawn in the Duma, and members of different parties rarely associate. The Committees form more or less neutral ground where deputies frequently sink their differences, and where they rub shoulders with the representatives of the bureaucracy who come down to give explanations on budget questions and on various Government bills. In the committees, the deputies study the complex

technique of administration and learn the workings of the bureaucratic machine. They are frequently enabled in this way effectively to oppose abuses, but often the bureaucratic spirit penetrates the committees and gently subdues those deputies who do not possess great force of character. It is strange to watch the process of the gradual bureaucratisation of the Duma through the committees. With the members of the Right, and even of the Centre, there was no difficulty, because a great many of them were bureaucrats by training and had simply retired from the service to become deputies. And on the left the mere depressing routine of the Duma, the impossibility of maintaining close contact with the country, and the necessity of constantly breathing the atmosphere of bureaucratic St. Petersburg has a devitalising and assimilative effect.

And yet the Duma is a pledge of progress. Its sittings are public, and are reported daily in all the newspapers of the Empire. The constant discussion of administrative questions has a broadly educative value. Every year the budget is discussed in detail, and the public has grown familiar with its main features and with the chief abuses that need remedying. The Duma has the right of questioning ministers on matters that call for protest. All parties frequently avail themselves of this privilege, and ministers are compelled to come down to the House to give explanations, the verdict of the Duma on which has a certain moral effect. An enormous amount of time is wasted on bills of minor importance, on such matters, for instance, as the employment of an additional postal official in Harbin, matters that might be relegated to the competence of some local body. But the Duma tries to promote reforms, to amend Government bills, to embody in law some of the constitutional principles. Only here its efforts are perpetually thwarted. The Upper House, the Council of the Empire, is a stronghold of the bureaucracy, and effectively blocks any measures that are disagreeable to the Government.

The Council of the Empire is an interesting institution, much more interesting in many ways than the Duma. Before the Constitution this Council had existed for nearly a hundred years as a kind of conclave, an advisory assembly of the highest legal authorities of the bureaucracy established for the purpose of drafting laws which the Monarch might, or might not, confirm at his pleasure. All the highest dignitaries of the Empire were there, ministers and ex-ministers, retired ambassadors, generals, admirals, and administrators of various categories. Of the Council of the Empire in its pre-constitutional form the artist Riepin has painted a striking and characteristic picture, which now hangs in the Alexander III Museum in St. Petersburg. With the promulgation of the Constitution and the establishment of the Duma, the Council was reformed. Half of the members are appointed by the Emperor as before, and the other half by the clergy and various public institutions such as provincial assemblies of the gentry, Zemstvos, industrialists' associations, and learned bodies. There are two hundred members in all. The Council meets in the Marie Palace, near St. Isaac's Cathedral, in a lofty, well-like hall, of scarlet and gleaming white, lighted from above. The President is seated high up on a commanding dais, and, looking down from the visitors' gallery one sees, far below, long rows of bald heads reposing in capacious arm-chairs. The party divisions roughly correspond to those in the Duma. There is a reactionary Right, a Conservative Centre, and a numerically inconsiderable Left composed of Cadet and Progressist professors and Zemstvo men. The Bureaucracy is safe here, for, not to speak of the appointed members, the greater proportion of the elected members are connected with the Bureaucracy by the most intimate ties. There is nothing here of the restlessness and nervousness of the Duma. There is an impressive dignity of deportment, an atmosphere of grave authority, a scrupulousness in the observance of formalities. Noisy declamation is frowned on.

The Council of the Empire.

All these elderly councillors with years of experience behind them, in the chancelleries and in the provinces, have a fine sense of the gradations of rank and authority, and are prepared at any moment, at the bidding of authority, to abandon their own carefully considered views. There are many able men in the Council, and their judgment on points of law and administration is often singularly valuable. Some of the speeches in the Council attain a high level of oratory. Original views are presented with exceptional cogency, subtlety of argument, and wealth of illustration. Only the net result of these stately debates is that reforms are simply decorously buried. The Council may waver and, on occasion, indulge in a mild flutter of opposition to the Government, but in the end it nearly always does as the Government wishes it to.

There is no better place than the Council of the Empire for studying the psychology of the Bureaucracy and the lingering Byzantine conceptions of authority. Complicated intrigues are carried on here, intrigues against the Cabinet, or between rival members of the Cabinet, intrigues that are played with great resource and a fine calculation of means and ends, and, above all, of the safety of the players. There is close contact between the Council and the Court. The Ministers are members of the Council and vote there. Official connection with the Duma is maintained by a Commission of Agreement, the object of which is to reconcile the different views of the two Houses on bills under debate. A loose, irregular and unofficial connection with the Lower House is maintained by the members of various parties, but the Council's persistent blocking of reform bills has created an antagonism between the Upper House and the majority of the Duma. The Council of the Empire carries on its business so quietly that the general public is almost oblivious of its existence. Two names in the Council of the Empire are widely known to the outside world. These are Count Sergius Witte, and the present Premier, M. Kokovstev.

Count Witte, on whose urgent advice the Emperor published the Constitutional Manifesto, has since the opening of the First Duma, ceased to take a prominent part in public life. There was a time when many were disposed to regard him as a very big man indeed, or, at any rate, as a man born under the bright star of power. The son of an official in Tiflis, educated in Tiflis and Odessa, he grew up on the outskirts of the Empire in a kind of colonial atmosphere, where Russian life was new, little hampered by tradition, rough and ready, devoted frankly to money-making. And if the circumstances of Witte's upbringing imbued him with strong business leanings of a very modern type, his years of service in the South Western Railways added to his taste for figures and the rapid movement of commercial enterprise, a keen interest in steel and iron with all their manifold applications, in a word, in modern industry. When he came in the nineties to St. Petersburg, his remarkable business ability attracted attention, and as Minister of Ways and Communications, and afterwards as Minister of Finance, he very energetically, and with little regard for tradition, applied modern business principles to the task of bureaucratic Government. He did his utmost, in fact, to modernise the bureaucracy, to bring it up to date, almost to Americanise it. He did succeed in effecting some very valuable financial reforms. He fixed the gold standard of the currency, and established a gold reserve in the Imperial Bank. He built a number of railways, including the Trans-Siberian, and by forcing on railway construction so that the great metallurgical works should never lack Government orders for railway material, and by maintaining in vigour a high protective tariff he tried to promote the development of industry in Russia. Witte was a man of big plans, big schemes, but the very bigness of Russia, the very vastness of the field before him caused him to forget the distinction between political and industrial enterprise. And when the inflated Manchurian schemes led to

Count Witte.

catastrophe abroad and grave internal disturbances, Witte perceived that the process of modernisation had not gone far enough, and he came home from America, the country of big business enterprise, with the conviction that a constitution was necessary. Then, when all the railways he had built stopped running, he succeeded in inducing the Emperor to promulgate a constitutional manifesto. For a time this big, very Russian-looking man, with the masterful manner, tried to apply business principles in the administration of the Constitution—there was a curious scent of business in the air in those early constitutional days—but he missed his way and somehow lost his footing. Probably the years during which, in spite of all his innovations, he had steadily adapted himself to the bureaucratic system, had made him too much of a bureaucrat after all. The glow of his sudden popularity faded during the winter of repression that followed on the constitutional edict, and the First Duma forgot all about him. Witte acted thenceforth quietly as a member of the Council of the Empire, only rarely emerging into prominence. For several years he felt the effects of the revulsion of feeling at Court against the Constitution. The reactionaries for long bitterly attacked him as a traitor to the Monarchical principle on the ground that he had misled the Emperor in inducing him to sign the Constitutional Manifesto. Witte waited, and then, at the first convenient opportunity, subtly affirmed in the Council of the Empire his devotion to the Autocracy, cautiously disavowed Constitutionalism, and little by little made good his position amongst the reactionaries. He was suspected of intriguing against Stolypin in 1909 and 1911, and there were vague rumours of a possibility of his being again called to power. In any case he was restored to favour after his professions of devotion to the Autocracy, and during the last few years, he has several times been received at Court. Perhaps as the wheel of fortune turns around he may again at some critical moment be made Premier. For the present he

remains a problematical figure in the background, an obscure reminder of great possibilities unfulfilled for lack of sheer consistency of purpose, of firmness of political principle, and of the finer forms of perception. His personal ambition was never absorbed in a glowing ardour of national renewal which might of itself have shown the right way and led Witte to real greatness.

M. Kokovstev.

The present Premier and Minister of Finances, M. Kokovstev, is a man of a very different type. In appearance he differs strikingly from Witte. Witte's bulky figure would overshadow M. Kokovstev, who is of less than middle height, and while Witte's whole bearing is suggestive of careless enterprise, M. Kokovstev's trim figure and neatly-clipped beard bespeak the methodical and circumspect mind. M. Kokovstev was born in the government of Novgorod, which has lost every vestige of its ancient democratic tradition, and has practically become a suburb of St. Petersburg. He has spent his whole life in the St. Petersburg Chancelleries, has steadily climbed rung after rung of the bureaucratic ladder, and acquired a thorough knowledge of the finances of the Empire, and since 1906 has been a shrewd, economical, and invariably optimistic Minister of Finance. He imperturbably negotiates loans in Paris, and with equal imperturbability defends article after article of his Budgets in the Duma. He speaks quietly, in rounded periods, frames his arguments, as he has for years been accustomed to frame them, in innumerable official reports, never hesitates for a word, never displays excessive emotion, rarely appeals to the emotions of his hearers. Once in a Duma speech he unexpectedly let fall a phrase, "Thank God! we have no Parliament," which aroused great indignation among the deputies, evoked a protest from the speaker, M. Homiakov, and for a time secured for M. Kokovstev the reputation of a reactionary bureaucrat who desired the abolition of Constitutional Government. The phrase was, however, due to a misunderstanding,

M. VLADIMIR KOKOVTSEV
(*President of the Council of Ministers*)

and all that M. Kokovstev intended to say was that the parliamentary system under which ministers were responsible to the Representative Assembly does not prevail in Russia. On the whole M. Kokovstev is believed to be cautiously progressive rather than reactionary in his views. But he is not a strong personality, and secures his ends rather by discreet self-effacement than by vigorous insistence on his own point of view. He certainly does not pursue either the policy of general repression, or the aggressive policy in regard to the non-Russian nationalities with the same energy as his predecessor. Even apart from differences of temperament there is a difference between the position of M. Kokovstev and that of M. Stolypin which largely accounts for certain divergences in their respective policies. While Stolypin as Premier retained the post of Minister of the Interior, M. Kokovstev retains as Premier the post of Minister of Finances and leaves the Ministry of the Interior to others. Under the pre-constitutional regime the Ministry of the Interior which has under its control governors, police, and gendarmerie, that is, the greater part of the machinery of administration, and practically all the machinery of oppression, was the most powerful of all. In a conflict between M. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, and M. Witte, the Minister of Finances, Plehve easily defeated his opponent, in spite of the latter's greater positive services. With the union of all the Ministers in a Cabinet or Council of Ministers, the chief power was formally placed in the hands of the President or Premier. But the old rivalry between the Ministries continued, and the Ministry of the Interior gradually recovered its influence and power. M. Durnovo, as Minister of the Interior in M. Witte's Cabinet, by his repressive policy succeeded in putting Witte completely in the shade. Stolypin, by retaining in his hands the Ministry of the Interior after he had become Premier, united with the formal authority implied in the Premiership the real power accruing from direct control over the machinery of the administration and repression. And it

was this circumstance that for a time made his position a peculiarly strong one, though in the end it involved him in a network of tragic contradictions. M. Kokovstev as a Premier occupying the post of Minister of Finance is naturally disposed to regard the whole task of Imperial administration from the financial and economic rather than the police point of view, and so to exercise on the whole a moderating and restraining influence. There has been no actual change of policy during his premiership, but perhaps there has been a change of tone.

Outside the Duma and the Council of the Empire there is little political life in the country except at election times. The only parties that had strong political organisations were the Cadets, and Social Democrats, but the Social democratic organisation has been persecuted out of visible existence, while that of the Cadets has been rendered largely ineffective by police repression. Members of the Duma rarely receive police permission to address their constituents, and members of the Centre and the Right hardly ever display a desire to do so. Ministers naturally never dream of stumping the country. It is only through the Press reports of the Duma debates that the country is kept in touch with the political life of the capital.

The political situation created by the curious combination of a bureaucracy with a representative assembly is full of difficulties, but also full of very interesting possibilities. The country is awake, is growing rapidly, has suddenly determined to be modern. The mental awakening and the economic boom have set the Empire definitely in the path of progress. One may hope that the pursuit of this path may be as painless as possible. But the Russian people has learned, during its historical development deep lessons of patience and suffering. It was not born for facile victories.

CHAPTER III

THE PRESS

THE condition of the Russian Press is conspicuously illustrative of the transition period through which the Empire is now passing. The Press is not free. It is still subjected to a variety of harassing restrictions. But it is freer than it was eight or nine years ago. Words that in 1904 were rigorously banned by the censor are now in daily use in newspapers of all shades. Opinions that until recently were regarded as seditious have now become mere unexciting commonplaces in the articles of hack journalists. Public criticism of the Administration is now permitted within certain limits. The discussion of home and foreign politics is conducted in the capitals with a latitude that renders possible a tolerably adequate statement of the pros and cons. Public opinion does now find expression to a considerable degree in the Press. There are risks, it is true. A responsible journalist must have a very keen perception of what is and what is not likely to bring down on his paper severe penalties from the authorities. But it is no longer necessary—in the capitals at least—to resort, as in old days, to inuendo or to quaint paraphrase in order to describe events that are of everyday occurrence in Western Europe. In 1904, for instance, it was considered a very daring feat when a Liberal paper in humorous verse described the approach of a railway train bringing a lady named "Ko," which, as the readers were supposed to understand, meant "Constitution." The word constitution is now reiterated a hundred times daily in various Russian organs and arouses no emotion whatever, except one of vague disappointment.

The Press.

The position of the Russian Press has undergone many changes during the turmoil of the last few years. Until October, 1905, the preventive censorship was in force.

Every number of a newspaper had to be submitted to a censor before publication, and the number could only be issued after the censor had erased whatever seemed to him objectionable. The opinion of the authorities constantly varies as to the limits of the permissible. A wide range of questions of burning interest might at any moment be declared unsuitable for treatment in the Press. Editors spent the midnight hours in tedious bargaining with censors over words and phrases. Sometimes the dispute would extend to more general topics, and the censors themselves would often unexpectedly express radical views. One night in 1905, a tired and yawning editor was astonished to hear his censor—who happened to be particularly meticulous in his criticism—declare himself a Tolstoyan.

To evade the censor's red pencil skilful circumlocution was necessary. The phrase, " legal order " did duty for " constitutional government." The words " socialism " and " socialist " were banned, but " Marxism " and " Marxist " were often allowed to pass. Opinions that could be freely expressed in a book of over 300 pages were sternly prohibited in newspapers. It was difficult for a press opposed to the bureaucracy to exist at all. That certain Liberal organs were allowed to exist was a concession to that modern spirit which the bureaucracy could not wholly ignore. And the appearance of several new Liberal organs in 1904 and 1905 was in itself an indication that the war and the internal unrest of those years had opened the eyes of the Government to the necessity of making concessions to public opinion. The growth of the Liberal Press in fact ran parallel with the steady multiplication of Government promises of reforms.

The Constitutional Manifesto of October 30, 1905, proclaimed the principle of liberty of the Press. For forty days —from November 4 till December 15—the Press did actually enjoy complete liberty. Editors simply ignored the censors, and no one interfered with them. Opinions of every kind were expressed with absolute freedom, and in the strongest

language. A large number of new organs—mostly of a socialistic character—appeared, and views that it had been until then possible to express only in revolutionary organs published abroad and smuggled across the frontier were enunciated with great force and emphasis in organs like the Social Democratic *Novaia Zhizn* that were sold daily in hundreds by elated newsboys on the Nevsky Prospect. Restrictive regulations were published on December 7, and again in March, and from the beginning of December onwards papers were constantly confiscated or suspended. But in spite of this renewal of administrative rigour, the Press continued to display great boldness. Newspapers were widely and eagerly read. New organs sprang up like mushrooms. Hundreds of educated and half-educated men and women flocked into journalism. The period from October, 1905, until the dissolution of the first Duma in June, 1906, was the hey-day of the Russian Press. In comparison with the liberty enjoyed then, the present state of the Press seems like a return to bondage. It is liberty only if compared with the pre-constitutional period.

If the position of the Press were determined only by the Provisional Regulations published in December, 1905, and March, 1906, Russian journalists would have comparatively little to complain of. The preventive censorship is abolished. Censors still exist, however, under another name. They are now called Press Inspectors, and Censorship Committees are known as Committees for the Affairs of the Press. The Censorship on foreign books and papers is maintained, and English, French, and German papers are still delivered with whole articles or illustrations blacked out, though this occurs less frequently than formerly, and the measure is now, as a rule, applied only to articles referring to the Imperial Family. But the permission of the authorities is not necessary, as it once was, in order to begin publishing a newspaper. All that is requisite is to make a formal notification. Separate numbers of newspapers may be confiscated on the order of

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the Press department, but the grounds of confiscation must be investigated by a court of law, which must either confirm the confiscation and impose a penalty on the editor for the offending article, or must acquit the editor and rescind the confiscation. That is to say, Press offences are placed in a line with other offences, and the final decision in regard to them rests, theoretically, not with the censor but with the Law Courts.

Under such conditions the lot of the Russian journalist might be almost a happy one but for two facts. The first is that the Courts have, during the last few years, been extremely severe in their treatment of Press offences. For articles, words, or phrases that displease the Administration, editors are prosecuted under certain very rigorous paragraphs of the Criminal Code, conviction under which involves long terms of imprisonment or exile. Hundreds of Russian journalists have served, or are serving, terms of imprisonment in a fortress for articles that could only by a stretch of the imagination be described as seditious. The term "sedition" has been expanded in judicial practice so as to cover any expression of opinion or emotion that is distasteful to the Government or to individual representatives of the Administration. The Courts are constantly occupied with so-called "literary cases." When the more urgent cases had been disposed of, the Press Department went back to 1906 and 1905 and prosecuted unfortunate journalists for articles that had long since been forgotten by everyone including the authors themselves. This class of cases was, fortunately expunged from the Court lists by the Amnesty, promulgated on the occasion of the Romanov tercentenary in February, 1913.

Restrictions on Liberty of the Press.

The second fact, which imposes a most appreciable restriction on the liberty of the Press, is the existence of the exceptional laws. That is to say, since the dissolution of the second Duma a very large portion of the Empire has been either under martial law, or one of the milder forms of the state of siege—of later years most frequently under the

form known as the state of enforced protection. Under these conditions the discretionary power of administrative officials, of governors-general, governors, and chiefs of police is very greatly increased. They may issue what are known as "Obligatory Regulations," and severely punish by fine, exile, or imprisonment all whom they regard as offenders against these regulations without recourse to a Court of Law. In many places the state of enforced protection is still maintained, long after every semblance of revolutionary danger is past, with the sole object of retaining rigorous administrative control over the Press. At the pleasure of prefects, governors, and chiefs of police, editors may be subjected to severe penalties, and the very publication of a newspaper rendered impossible. The practice of closing or suspending newspapers has been to a great extent abandoned, because it was discovered that such measures were made ineffective by the simple expedient of continuing to publish the same paper under another name. In consequence of repeated suspensions during 1906 and 1907, the number of possible titles of Russian newspapers was almost exhausted, so that to discover a title for a new paper now involves a heavy tax on originality. The Administration has found a much more effective method of control. It imposes fines which gradually wear down the capital of a newspaper and tend to make journalism an unprofitable enterprise. The imprisonment of the editor is offered as an alternative to a fine, and the poorer provincial papers frequently prefer this form of penalty to direct financial loss. But the practice of imprisoning editors has again led to a curious method of defence. The person who is liable to imprisonment is the so-called "responsible editor," whose name appears at the end of the paper. For this reason, as a rule, the actual working editor remains in the background, and the paper is signed by a person specially employed for the purpose, and known as the "sitting editor." A Liberal paper that commenced publication in St. Petersburg in 1912 broke with the custom, the

actual editor came into the open and signed as responsible editor. One night, in revising the proofs of an article attacking a certain police official named Colonel Halle, he struck out the name Halle as a precaution against possible penalties. When the article appeared, the Press Department took the word " colonel " as referring to a more exalted personage, and by administrative order the editor was sentenced to three months' imprisonment without the option of a fine. The proprietors took the lesson to heart, and engaged as responsible editor a long-bearded, impecunious peasant at a salary of five pounds a month while at liberty, and half as much again while in gaol.

The newspapers in the capitals maintain a fairly tolerable existence in spite of occasional fines and the constant prosecution of responsible editors. There is a very wide range of subjects now in regard to which free discussion is entirely permissible, and the fact that the whole extent of Imperial Policy is publicly discussed in the Duma makes it impossible to carry restrictions on the metropolitan Press to an extreme. The case of the provincial Press is infinitely worse. In the small provincial towns where the officials have little to do, everybody knows everybody, and there are all kinds of petty intrigues and personal accounts to settle, journalists are wholly at the mercy of governors and other officials armed with discretionary powers. The treatment of the provincial Press supplies an inexhaustible fund of curious anecdotes. One day, in 1906, the *Viatsky Krai*, in Viatka, failed to appear, because the governor had expelled from the town every member of the staff. A newspaper in Kherson was fined for publishing a telegram of the official Telegraph Agency reporting a speech of Sir Francis Younghusband's on Tibetan affairs. A governor of Tambov, M. Muratov, drew up a list of newspapers under three heads, " desirable," " undesirable," and " absolutely intolerable," and closed public libraries and dismissed elementary school teachers who subscribed to organs of the latter two categories. Printing works are frequently

closed so as to prevent the publication of a newspaper. The only printing works in the town of Kozlov, for instance, were closed three times so as to make it impossible to publish a little paper called the *Kozlovskaia Gazeta*. To evade such measures several papers intended for the town of Kaluga were printed in Moscow, which is only a few hours distant. The Administration constantly prohibits reference to certain facts in the Press. It has been forbidden, for instance, at various times and in various places, to refer to the dissolution of the Duma, to the funeral of the Speaker of the First Duma, Muromtsev, and the funeral of Tolstoy, to the fanatical monk, Iliodor, or to the notorious *agent provocateur*, Azev. All these subjects might be regarded as political, but reference has also been frequently prohibited to events of an entirely non-political character. The papers of one town were forbidden to refer to a woman who had thrown sulphuric acid in the face of a priest, other papers were forbidden to touch on the behaviour of the teachers in the local high school, while the papers of a town in the Northern Caucasus were not permitted to mention the bad acting of an artiste with whom the local chief of police was on friendly terms. Papers are occasionally fined for printing reports of Panslavist meetings, for misprints, and even for publishing shorthand reports of debates in the Duma. The total of fines imposed on the Press in 1912 was 100,000 roubles (£10,000). The editor of a paper named *Yug* declared he was ill, whereupon the local governor suspended his paper on the ground that a sick man could not edit a newspaper. Many provincial editors have been so harassed by the authorities that they have in despair offered to submit their papers to a preventive censorship. A paper called the *Yuzhnia Viedomosti*, published in the Crimea, was confiscated seventy times, but the editor was only prosecuted three times. And similar instances of the arbitrary attitude of the Administration to journalists might be multiplied endlessly.

The remarkable thing is, that in spite of the abuses that

are inseparable from the present system, the Russian Press, especially in the provinces, is steadily developing; the number of organs is increasing, and on the whole their quality is improving. People live and grow in spite of politics. There is a fairly wide neutral sphere which lies outside the range of the most acrimonious political dispute. Russia is an immense Empire. There are governors and governors, and, if in one town, the chief of police persecutes the editor of the Opposition journal, in another town he plays cards with him. And many editors have grown wise in this their troubled generation, and have learned to avoid possible pitfalls. Journalists suffer far more from administrative penalties than they did in the days of preventive censorship. But over against this must be set the fact that there are far more newspapers than there were, and that the number of journalists has greatly increased. And in spite of all restrictions the Press is now actually in a position to express, however imperfectly, to guide, and to educate public opinion.

The Press in the Capitals and the Provinces.

The Russian Press falls into two very distinct categories, the Press of the capitals, and the provincial journals. In a highly centralised country like Russia the metropolitan press naturally occupies, as compared with that of the provinces, a position of commanding importance. It has more direct access to the sources of political information, and is, moreover, less subject than the provincial press to harassing restrictions. The big St. Petersburg and Moscow papers circulate widely in the provinces, and frequently the local organs serve merely as a stop-gap to curiosity until the mail brings the big papers with all the news of the political centres. But of late years the provincial press has grown in importance, and there are some papers, like the *Kievskaia Mysl* (Kiev Thought), which are so well supplied by telegraph and telephone with the latest political news, and have such a wide circulation that they need fear no longer the competition of St. Petersburg and Moscow organs. In

remote towns, too, like Baku, Tomsk, or Vladivostok, which receive the papers from the capitals many days after publication, the local press naturally plays a much more important part than, for instance, in towns like Yaroslavl or Riazan, which get the Moscow papers on the afternoon of the day of issue. In respect of provincial circulation there is a certain rivalry between St. Petersburg and Moscow. The St. Petersburg papers have the advantage of proximity to the Ministries and to the Duma, and for that reason their political news is a little more authoritative than that of the Moscow Press. But the Moscow papers get nearly all the important news by telephone in time for publication simultaneously with the St. Petersburg papers. The reports of Duma sittings and lobby gossip are regularly telephoned, so that the advantages of the St. Petersburg papers in this respect are almost imponderable, and are a matter rather of atmosphere and direct personal contact between journalists, deputies, and officials. And what St. Petersburg, as a journalistic centre, gains politically she loses geographically. Moscow, in virtue of her more central position, commands the communications with Eastern and Southern Russia, which the St. Petersburg papers reach a day later than those of the ancient capital. The St. Petersburg Press has direct access only to the more thinly populated Western and Northern region. Thus, the most widely-circulated paper in Russia is the *Russkoè Slovo*, a Moscow organ of the *Daily Telegraph* type, which is well supplied with the latest news by telegraph and telephone, but politically enjoys less authority than many other papers with a much more limited circulation.

The best known of the St. Petersburg papers is the *Novoe Vremia* (New Time), founded in 1877 by Alexis Suvorin.

The "Novoe Vremia."

The distinguishing feature of the *Novoe Vremia* is its opportunism. It attacks individual ministers and even certain cliques or groups within the Government. But its criticism is not that of an outsider, but of a representative of the governing party.

The *Novoe Vremia* is not an official paper, the views it expresses do not by any means always represent the views held by the Government at a given moment. They rather represent a shrewd compromise between official views and public opinion. There are certain organs that are confessedly reactionary, that demand a complete return to the autocracy. The *Novoe Vremia* is not one of these. It stands for representative institutions, it stands for the existing system. If a Liberal government were to come into power to-morrow, the *Novoe Vremia* would probably be a Liberal organ. It owes its material success to the extraordinary skill with which its late proprietor—M. Suvorin died in 1912—combined a good news service with a system of playing off one bureaucratic tendency against another, so as to give the impression of a movement of public opinion. Every influential chinovnik, or government official, is, in his heart of hearts, a critic, and very frequently a cynic. He criticises the way things are done, criticises his superiors, criticises the whole administrative system, is constantly murmuring or complaining. He murmurs but he conforms, he does not revolt against the system. When the *Novoe Vremia* criticises, it as often as not expresses the views of influential chinovniks. And from time to time it clears itself of all suspicion of heretical Opposition views by vehement attacks on Opposition parties and an ardent defence of Government policy.

But at the same time the *Novoe Vremia* carefully takes into account the prevailing tendency of public opinion. It was during the Russo-Turkish war when a strong body of Russian public opinion enthusiastically supported the Government's Balkan policy that M. Suvorin founded his organ, and it was on the summit of this wave of national enthusiasm that the journal first came into prominence. Since that time the *Novoe Vremia* has pursued a Nationalist and Pan-Slavist policy, carefully adapting its expression to the shade assumed by official Nationalism at every given moment. After the

Russo-Turkish war official Nationalism sharply separated itself from that generous enthusiasm for the liberation of kindred peoples which was the mainspring of public interest in the war, and became almost exclusively synonymous with the oppression of subject peoples within the Russian Empire. The *Novoe Vremia* identified itself with the official policy, and during the reaction of the eighties and nineties, when public opinion was almost suppressed out of existence, Suvorin remained within the safe shelter of conformity, and devoted his attention to the development of a good new service. During the period of unrest which followed on the outbreak of the war with Japan, the *Novoe Vremia* closely followed the movement of public opinion, was liberal at a moment when Liberalism seemed to have invaded the higher ranks of the bureaucracy, and in the early days of the First Duma even ventured to publish a few articles in praise of the Constitutional Democrats, only to attack them the more violently when it became clear that they had failed.

The late M. Suvorin, the founder of the *Novoe Vremia*, and until a few years ago its sole proprietor, was of peasant origin, and had a peasant's shrewdness, a peasant's freedom from doctrinaire prepossessions. He was a cool observer, a sceptic, a talented and witty writer with an eye for talent in others, and a man of strong temperament, with a vigorous, instinctive attachment to Russia and things Russian, so that he was frequently able to impart to his Nationalist policy a tone of personal conviction. He gathered round him a group of clever writers, paid them well, and constantly gave the closest attention to details of organisation, making the *Novoe Vremia* unrivalled in Russia from the point of view of newspaper technique. He was a connoisseur of the theatre, and founded a theatre of his own in St. Petersburg. Suvorin's character was made up of curiously contradictory elements ; he was a hard man of business and very generous in private life ; loyal in his friendships and shrewdly unscrupulous in his politics ; a genuine admirer of the arts and letters, but

capable from commercial, personal, or political motives, of substituting false values for true in art.

The most widely-known of the contributors to the *Novoe Vremia* is M. Menshikov, a journalist of amazing productivity. Fifteen years ago he published a weekly in which he advocated an almost undiluted Tolstoyism. M. Menshikov parades his inconsistency, and his articles are the most perfect expression of the opportunist policy of the *Novoe Vremia*. The very length of the articles seems to increase their authority amongst officials, and their contemptuous fluency, their nonchalant word-play, the ceaseless shimmering of their facile generalisations, their insinuations and their flattery, are all factors in M. Menshikov's reputation as a publicist.

A journalist of a very different type is M. Vasili Rozanov, also a contributor to the *Novoe Vremia*. M. Rozanov is a man of very great and original talent with a curious, almost pagan, capacity for observing the movement of elemental processes, for noting the workings of nature in things human. There is a great deal in his writing that is suggestive of Tolstoy, and much more that is suggestive of Dostoievsky, and the originality, the unexpectedness of his point of view startles, and charms, but now more and more frequently repels. M. Rozanov has a quaint, sly humour, and is the enemy of the doctrinaire habit of mind. His favourite themes are marriage, the family, and the Church. Consistency he does not even pretend to observe. He is a Russian to the core, and his talent largely consists in the boldness with which he expresses a peculiarly Russian, realistic outlook.

The "Russkia Viedomosti."

The oldest and most authoritative of the Liberal organs is the Moscow *Russkia Viedomosti* (Russian 'News), which was founded fifty years ago, that is to say, at the time when Alexander II was emancipating the serfs and carrying into execution his other great reforms. The *Russkia Viedomosti* has throughout these fifty years maintained the Liberal traditions of that epoch with a remarkable consistency that never faltered even

in the darkest moments of reaction. There is a type of mind known as that of " a Liberal of the sixties," broadly humanitarian, rather cosmopolitan than assertively Russian, just, moderate, dignified, and full of a deep compassion with a fine loyalty to abstract principle, and an unflinching devotion to a clear, unclouded ideal of liberty. Of this type of mind the *Russkia Vicdomosti* is the best representative in the world of journalism. Its reputation is unsullied. It stands guard over the public conscience. It is sometimes dry, but it is never vulgar. By its moderation and fairness it frequently incurs the contempt of violent partisans, but it has never pandered to any of the powers that be. In 1898 it was suspended for two months, and afterwards subjected to a special form of preventive censorship.

The *Russkia Viedomosti* has always been in close touch with Moscow University. Its former editors, MM. Sobolievski, Chuprov, Posnikov, and Anuchin were professors, and other professors frequently wrote leading articles or contributed special articles of various kinds. At present the principal members of the editorial staff are Professors Kiesewetter and Kokoshkin. The *Russkia Viedomosti* is famed for the accuracy of its news. In the pre-constitutional period its foreign correspondents, more especially Iollos in Berlin, and Dioneo in London, imparted constitutional lessons in a veiled form by emphasising those features of European life that most vividly illustrated the benefits of civil liberty. In 1905 the *Russkia Viedomosti* played an important part in connection with the Constitutional movement that found expression in the Zemstvo Congress, and it was the first Russian organ to publish a project for a Constitution. For the last few years the journal has supported the Constitutional Democratic Party in the main, but it retains an independent position, and cannot in any sense be regarded as the official organ of the party.

The official organ of the Constitutional Democratic Party, or rather the organ of its leader, M. Miliukov, is the *Riech*,

published in St. Petersburg. The *Riech* was founded in 1906, shortly before the opening of the First Duma, and has gained a position of authority by virtue of its connection with the strongest and most influential of the Opposition parties. It is published by two prominent members of the First Duma, the Zemstvo leader, M. Petrunkevich, and M. Nabokov. The working editor is M. Joseph Hessen, while the policy of the paper is determined almost exclusively by M. Miliukov, who writes the majority of the leading articles on political questions. M. Miliukov is one of the few publicists in Russia who have a considerable knowledge of international politics, and his articles on the Near East, of which he has a first-hand knowledge, are of special interest.

The "Riech" and other Journals.

The Moscow *Russkoe Slove*, the most widely-circulated paper in Russia, has already been mentioned. It was founded in 1900 by a printer and publisher named Sytin, and gained popularity during the Russo-Japanese war mainly on account of the telegrams of M. Nemirovich-Danchenko, a veteran war-correspondent and novelist, who made his name during the Russo-Turkish war, and again acted as special correspondent of the *Russkoe Slove* during the war of the Balkan Allies with Turkey. Another contributor who has largely helped to increase the circulation of the *Russkoe Slovo* is M. Vlas Doroshevich, the author of witty feuilletons written in the form of short sentences, each of which is a paragraph in itself, the effect being that of a series of pistol shots. The *Russkoe Slovo* makes a speciality of feuilletons, articles of a light, descriptive, or pictorial character, and many prominent Russian writers contribute from time to time articles of this kind. The journal spends large sums on telegrams from the provinces and abroad. The *Russkoe Slovo* is a non-party paper, but its general policy is one of Opposition to the Government in conformity with the prevailing tendency of public opinion.

The *Birzhevia Viedomosti* (Bourse Gazette) is a St.

Petersburg newspaper that resembles the *Russkoe Slovo* in many respects. It is non-party, opposed to the Government, sensational and gossipy. Its provincial edition is widely read by country priests and village school teachers.

During the last two years two tiny Social Democratic papers, the *Pravda* and the *Luch* have been permitted to appear in St. Petersburg, though they have been confiscated almost daily, and their editors fined and imprisoned with monotonous reiteration.

The *Golos Moskvy* (Voice of Moscow), founded by M. Guchkov, was for some years the organ of the Octobrist Party. In so far as the party has an organ now, the *Novoe Vremia* must be regarded as such.

Since 1906 the Government has published an official daily under the name of the *Rossia*. The organ of the Ministry of Finance, *The Commercial and Industrial Gazette*, is valued by business men for its wealth of news.

A peculiar position is occupied in Russia by the so-called Right, or Reactionary Press. In the pre-constitutional period there were practically three organs of the type, which on principle upheld the autocracy. One was the *Moskovskia Viedomosti*, an old-established organ which subsists on Treasury advertisements, and acquired importance in the sixties under the editorship of Katkov, who was the leading spokesman of the policy of oppressing the subject nationalities, and the chief interpreter of that later school of Slavophil thought which identified support of the Autocracy, the Orthodox faith and the Russian Nationality with the harshest manifestations of the bureaucratic system. Katkov was a talented writer, and, for all his reactionary tendencies, he frequently revealed glimpses of certain broader aspects of Imperial policy which even a reactionary bureaucracy was compelled to take into account. His successor, Gringmuth, a Lutheran who went over to the Orthodox Church, was a typical "carrieriste," and pursued Katkov's policy without

his talent. Under the editorship of M. Lev Tikhomirov, a one-time revolutionary and terrorist, who assumed control of the paper after Gringmuth's death a few years ago, the *Moskovskia Viedomosti* has sunk into complete obscurity.

The second old-established organ of the Right is the *Grazhdanin* (The Citizen), a weekly published in St. Petersburg by Prince Meshchersky. The *Grazhdanin* was founded in 1872, and among its editors during the early years of its existence was the novelist Dostoievsky, who published in it week by week " A Writer's Diary." At first the general tone of the journal was that of a moderate Conservatism, but towards the end of the century it became markedly and aggressively reactionary. Since the promulgation of the Constitution Prince Meshchersky has maintained in principle his reactionary standpoint, but under the cover of his defence of the autocracy he has permitted himself an undisturbed liberty of criticism of the Government's policy which is denied to more progressive journalists. The Liberal journals, in fact, frequently quote from Prince Meshchersky's organ strong remarks about the Government, which would involve fines or imprisonment if their author were a declared Constitutionalist. Prince Meshchersky is an able and witty writer, and a keen observer, and retains in old age a remarkable freshness.

The third of the Right organs dating from the pre-constitutional period is the little St. Petersburg daily *Sviet*, founded by a retired officer, Komarov, and circulating chiefly among petty tradesmen. The *Sviet* subsists on a few simple reactionary ideas which it expresses in plain, and at times, boisterous language. Its style is more moderate, however, than that of the Right organs of the post-constitutional period.

Of these organs, the most striking characteristic of which is a remarkable virulence of language, the most prominent is the *Russkoe Znamia* (Russian Banner). There is no paper

quite like the *Russkoe Znamia* anywhere. Its subject-matter consists of unbridled abuse of Jews, revolutionaries, Liberals, constitutionalists of all shades including Octobrists, of Poles and other non-Russian nationalities in the Empire, of Young Turks and Englishmen, varied with hysterical cheers for Throne and Altar, violent attacks on individual Ministers, or at times on the whole Cabinet, threats of physical violence against certain individuals or groups. The *Russkoe Znamia* is, in fact, the organ of that " Union of the Russian people " which played such a prominent part in the pogroms or anti-Semitic riots and massacres of a few years ago. It is characteristic of the spirit of the times that a journal of this kind enjoys complete liberty of abuse, and is only very rarely fined, while the Progressive Press is subjected to the severest restraint. The odd thing is, that enjoying practical immunity in virtue of their clamorous defence of the autocracy, organs of the *Russkoe Znamia* type frequently adopt an almost revolutionary tone, vehemently attack the bureaucracy and proclaim a revolt against the Holy Synod. During the last two years the protection accorded to the Reactionary Unions and their organs has been to some extent withdrawn, and they have been compelled to moderate their tone. All three, the *Russkoe Znamia*, the *Kolokol* (The Bell), a clerical organ, and the *Zemshchina* (The Voice of the Nation), the organ of the deputy Purishkevich, are valueless as purveyors of news, are devoid of talent, and owe whatever influence they possess to the support of certain powerful circles.

Newspapers are published in the Russian Empire in a great variety of languages besides Russian, in German, for instance, French, Finnish, Swedish, Polish, Lettish, Lithuanian, Esthonian, Hebrew, Yiddish, Little Russian, White Russian, Tartar, Kirghiz, Armenian, Georgian, Persian, and Yakut (in Eastern Siberia). This non-Russian Press presents many interesting features, but a detailed description of it would be more in place in an account of the various nationalities it represents than in a work like the present.

Apart from administrative restrictions the Russian journalist works very much under the same conditions as his confrère in Western Europe. There are certain peculiarities in the arrangements of Russian papers which strike the English eye. Articles are more frequently signed than not. The names of the most prominent journalists are consequently familiar to the public, and the personal element plays a great part in journalism. Nearly all newspapers publish from time to time—especially towards the end of the year, when subscriptions for the coming year are looked for—lists of their contributors, or lists of "collaborators," as the members of the editorial staff and contributors are usually called. Many of the so-called "collaborators" are well-known professors or literary or public men who rarely write in the journal in question, but are content to let their names add lustre to the list. When a collaborator is offended or dissatisfied with an article that has appeared in the paper or with some development in the paper's policy, he as often as not retires, and does so by publicly withdrawing his name from the list of collaborators. Sometimes a whole group of collaborators retires at once, and then they publish a letter in the journal from which they have retired, or in a rival journal, explaining the grounds for their resignation. Another feature that is strange to English newspaper readers is the "Review of the Press," which most journals publish daily, and which consists of short extracts from articles in other papers, accompanied with comments, more often caustic than laudatory. This constant bandying of compliments is in striking contrast with that English habit of resolutely ignoring the existence of every other paper but your own, which was so rigidly maintained until within recent years.

The regular staff of a Russian paper usually consists of an editor, an assistant-editor, a "responsible" or sitting editor, engaged specially in view of possible exigencies of prison service, a foreign editor with one or more assistants, an editor

of the provincial department also, with one or more assistants, a " manager of the chronicle," or news editor with an army of reporters, a dramatic critic with assistants, an art critic, a music critic, and an editor of the literary department, all with more or fewer assistants, as the case may be. In addition, the big papers have foreign correspondents, and also correspondents in most of the provincial towns. Few Russian papers pay such attention to their foreign department as do the big English papers. The place of city editor is filled by the " editor of the economic department." There are " night editors," too, or " issuers," who read proofs, and, together with the printer, make up the paper. And then there are the regular contributors, of whom some have functions hardly distinguishable from those of English leader-writers, that is, they must be prepared to write at any moment on subjects of which they are supposed to have expert knowledge—while others are feuilletonists, whose duty it is to write witty or amusing articles on literary subjects or on occurrences in real life, on anything in fact, or nothing at all, so long as the result is interesting or amusing. Journalists are of all ranks and classes, peasants, Cossacks, country gentlemen, retired officers, officials, professors, students, artists, and novelists.

There is a considerable number of women journalists, some of whom are feuilletonists, others are reporters, while occasionally women occupy the editor's chair. During the short period when the Press enjoyed comparative liberty and newspapers sprang up in abundance, there was a stampede into the ranks of journalism, and one humorist remarked at the time that the bulk of the so-called journalists were dentists, chemists' assistants, and retired tailors. The reaction dealt hardly with this army of writers, and most of the journalists who are now active are, or have become, professionals. Jews play a conspicuous part in journalism in Russia, as in other continental countries. The bulk of the reporting is in their hands, and many

editors, leader-writers, and feuilletonists are of Jewish extraction.

In the capitals journalists are, on the whole, well paid. The average price for an article is ten kopeks (2½d.) a line, and sometimes fifteen or twenty kopeks are paid, in exceptional cases twenty-five, while well-known and productive feuilletonists may receive even fifty kopeks (over a shilling) per line in addition to a large salary. A popular feuilletonist earns from a thousand to four thousand a year. Energetic reporters earn large sums, especially if, as they often do, they sell their news to several papers at the same time, and know how to take advantage of the reporters' syndicates, which serve for the interchange of news among their members.

The number of illustrated weeklies in Russia is small in comparison with those of England, France, and Germany. Such papers as the *Novoe Vremia*, and the *Russkoe Slovo*, publish weekly illustrated supplements, and their example has been followed by some of the provincial organs. Most of the newspapers in the capitals from time to time print photographs illustrating the events of the day, and there seems to be a growing demand for caricatures. An illustrated weekly of long standing called the *Niva* has a wide circulation. Its illustrations are old-fashioned, but it frequently publishes fiction by the best Russian authors. Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, for instance, was first published in this journal. And the *Niva* has done great service in issuing gratis to its subscribers complete editions of the Russian classics, and of the works of modern authors whose copyright has not yet expired.

Comic papers had a vogue in Russia during the months immediately following on the proclamation of the Constitution. These papers were devoted almost exclusively to political satire, and contained bitter, grotesque, violent, and extraordinarily witty attacks on representatives of the old régime. The Russian has a strong sense of humour, and the

conversation of merchants, workmen, and peasants is full of witty sayings. Comic papers ought to flourish. But the political reaction seems to have made such papers not only physically but psychologically impossible. The organs of political satire were suppressed, and most of their editors imprisoned or banished in the course of 1906 and 1907. And since then comic papers have almost ceased to exist. The only journals of the type that are published rarely dare venture into the field of politics, and are, as a rule, simply dull, when they are not vulgar.

The Monthlies.

Monthly magazines are plentiful, and occupy a very important position in Russian public life. In the pre-constitutional period they exerted a very appreciable educative influence. The censorship was far more lenient with the monthlies than with the dailies, just as it dealt more gently with big and dear books than with little books that everyone might buy. And in the monthlies it was possible by a judicious choice of phrase to discuss political and economic questions with considerable freedom. Moreover, the monthlies have always played an important part in the development of Russian literature. Novels and stories are, as a rule, published in magazines before appearing in book form. The great novels of Turgeniev, Dostoievsky, and Tolstoy nearly all made their first appearance in the "thick journals," as the monthlies are usually called in Russia, and even now the success of the monthlies depends upon the ability of the editors to secure for publication fiction by the most prominent writers of the day.

The appearance and make-up of the Russian monthlies are very different from English magazines like the *Fortnightly* or *Contemporary*. In the first place they are undoubtedly "thick." An average number contains from 400 to 800 pages, separate paging being sometimes adopted for different sections of the magazine. The first section is devoted to poetry and fiction, original and translated,

including serial novels and short stories which are printed in larger type than the rest of the magazine. Then follows a section containing contributed articles on political, economic, scientific, educational, or literary subjects, the length of each article varying from sixteen to thirty-two pages or more of close print. Then follow, in most magazines, reviews of home politics, foreign politics, and events in the provinces. The final section is devoted to book-reviews. There are no illustrations. Magazines of this kind were particularly serviceable in the pre-constitutional period, when they served as substitutes for newspapers, public meetings, and debating societies. As a rule they were well edited, and maintained a high literary and ethical standard, stimulated a sound and genuine interest in public questions, and systematically educated public opinion in a way that the daily Press was wholly prevented from doing. Perhaps a lingering tendency to excessive generalisation in the discussion of public questions is to be explained by the fact that for years the average Russian reader was accustomed to observe the march of history in the long perspective of a monthly review and not through the flashlight of the daily press, while the events he was permitted to observe were not the thousand-and-one occurrences at his own doors, but the broad outlines of movements in distant Western Europe. During the last few years the development of the daily press has led to certain modifications of the "thick journals."

The oldest of the existing monthlies is the *Viestnik Yevropy* (Messenger of Europe), founded forty-eight years ago, and edited for many years by the late M. Stasiulevich. The *Viestnik Yevropy*, like the *Russkia Viedomosti*, is a heritage of the Liberalism of the sixties, and has throughout maintained a very honourable tradition of scrupulous fairness, good taste, and unswerving loyalty to Liberal principle. Among its contributors were Turgeniev, who printed most of his later works in the *Viestnik Yevropy*, another classical novelist,

Goncharóv, and such distinguished historians as Kostomarov, Soloviev (the author of the standard History of Russia), Kavelin, and Pypin. For the last thirty years M. Konstantin Arseniev has conducted the Review of Home Politics in the magazine with singular tact, ability, and firmness. His standpoint is that of a broad-minded Liberal hostile to excesses of every kind. A few years ago the magazine passed into the hands of Professor Maksim Kovalesky, a sociologist well known in France and England, who now edits it in conjunction with M. Arseniev. The *Viestnik Yevropy* is a sober, non-party organ of moderate Liberal tendencies, and it appeals chiefly to Liberal officials and comfortably-off, middle-aged members of the professional classes.

The *Russkaia Mysl* (Russian Thought), was founded thirty-three years ago in Moscow, and was for many years an organ of a progressive and eclectic type, printing contributions from most of the prominent writers of the day, irrespective of their political views. In 1908 M. Peter Struve became editor, and since then the magazine has been the organ of this most original of the Russian political thinkers of the present day. M. Struve, who was at one time a Social Democrat, and from 1902 to 1905 edited, in Stuttgart and Paris, the organ of the Liberal Zemstvo Constitutionalists *Osvobozhdenie*, is a man of great learning and of uncompromising independence of thought. He is an enemy of political dogma, of sectarianism, of catchwords, and hackneyed phrases. During the last few years he has waged constant warfare against certain inveterate mental habits of the Russian intelligentsia, or progressive educated class, such as an excessive tendency to negation, and a lack of sense of the State, which, in his view, largely accounted for the insignificant character of the results achieved by the Revolutionary movement of a few years ago. M. Struvè's standpoint is now that of a "realist" liberalism, and he has developed his views in a series of able articles many of which appeared in the *Russkaia Mysl*, and have since been published in book form under the general title of

Patriotica. M. Struve was the initiator of a volume of essays by various writers called *Viehi,* or "Way marks," which aroused great interest by the severity of its attacks on the intelligentsia, and had, for a volume of essays, an unprecedented success, running into five editions. In the *Russkaia Mysl* M. Struve has gathered around him a band of kindred spirits, and this magazine is the freshest and most interesting of all the Russian monthlies. It is now published in St. Petersburg.

The *Russkoe Bogatstvo* (Russian Wealth), founded in 1876, was for many years the most widely-circulated of the Russian monthly magazines. It was the organ of the Russian Populists or Agrarian Socialists, one section of whom founded at the beginning of the present century the Socialist Revolutionary party. Nicholas Mikhailovsky, who edited the magazine from 1895 till his death in 1904, exercised by its means an enormous influence. In his monthly articles on current topics he expressed views on all aspects of economics, sociology, and literature, which rapidly became part of the mental stock-in-trade of the bulk of the Russian intelligentsia. His writings were of value in their insistence on the necessity of personal initiative and social service. But in many respects they had a narrowing effect, and it is the mental attitude they encouraged that writers like M. Struve are now combating. The most attractive feature of the *Russkoe Bogatstvo* is, and always has been, the warm sympathy it displays for the peasantry. M. Korolenko, a writer of short stories distinguished by their sincere humanitarian feeling, has for some years past been a leading member of the editorial staff, and with him are associated MM. Miakotin and Peshehonov, leaders of a party known as the Populist Socialists, which enjoyed a certain prominence during the session of the Second Duma.

Another Socialist monthly is the *Sovremenny Mir* (The Modern World), formerly known as the *Mir Bozhy* (God's World), which represents the opponents of the Agrarian

Socialists, the Marxists, or Social Democrats. This magazine owed its success to the energetic management of its former proprietress, Madame Davydova, wife of a well-known violoncellist and a friend of Rubinstein's. Under Madam Davydova's management the *Sovremenny Mir* was by no means exclusively socialistic, and opened its doors wide to contributions from every quarter. Thus M. Miliukov printed in its pages his *Studies in the History of Russian Culture*, which, in their collected form, became the standard work on the subject. The *Sovremenny Mir* has of late years declined in importance, and suffers from the competition of newer Socialist monthlies like the *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary), and *Zavety* (The Covenants). The subscription price of the large monthlies, which ranges from nine to fifteen roubles (eighteen to thirty shillings) a year, sets a definite limit to their circulation, and of late a cheaper type of magazine intended to appeal to a broader public has made its appearance. *Zhizn dlia vsieh* (literally " Life for all," in the sense of Everybody's Review), is a magazine of this kind, in which the articles and stories are written in exceedingly simple language adapted to the comprehension of the average working man and progressive peasant.

Changes in Journalism.

Russian journalism is passing through a very difficult period of transition. The Press is naturally peculiarly sensitive to the political atmosphere, and the character of the present political situation largely accounts for the limitations of newspapers and magazines. But non-political influences also make themselves felt. The whole tone and temper of Russian life is changing, and this change finds expression in a hundred different ways in journals of all shades of opinion. Standards are being modified, ideas and ideals cast into the melting pot. Perhaps one way of describing the change would be to say that Russian life is far more sophisticated than it used to be, both in the good and the bad sense. Less importance is attached to abstract principles and to

generalisations of every kind. The demands of real life are asserting themselves with greater persistence and effect. Perhaps there is no less idealism than there was, but the stars of principle are being hitched to ponderous, rumbling waggons of everyday, cheerless necessity. The events of the last few years have dissipated fond illusions, or have substituted for them the chilling illusion that life is not particularly worth living. The average Russian has, at the best, become cooler and more hard-headed, and at the worst he has become a cynic and a sensualist.

The change is clearly reflected in the Press. Writers of leading articles are more disposed to concentrate their attention on details of current policy than to assert general principles, and this, not only because of administrative pressure, but because the whole mood of the time is averse from the reiteration of general principles. There is a certain gain in this, since sobering contact with reality tends to give a more practical turn to Russian political thinking and action. But the position is depressing and uncongenial to the Russian character, and certainly gives little scope for the display of journalistic talent. The governing commercial spirit, the increasing absorption in money-making is also distinctly affecting journalism. This is not to say that journalism pays. It does pay a certain limited number of persons, but under present conditions in Russia a newspaper must be regarded as rather a losing than a paying concern. Only a very few papers return big profits, and most proprietors consider themselves lucky if they can make both ends meet. There are, however, clear indications of a change in this respect. Business is growing in Russia by leaps and bounds. Foreign capital is coming into the country, native capital is growing more modern in its forms of enterprise. Modern business means advertising, and the advertisement sheets of the newspaper are far more important than they were a few years ago. Formerly most Russian papers were purely political organs, and owed whatever success they enjoyed

to the popularity of their policy. The papers that combined politics with commerce were the exception. But now the Press has become responsive to the swifter pulsation of economic life, and the secret of newspaper success, to judge by some of the Moscow and provincial papers, seems to lie in a judicious combination of radical politics with unabashed commercialism. One thing, however, must be made clear. There have been cases in which Russian papers have resorted to blackmail, subsidised articles and other methods of the kind in vogue in many European countries. But the great majority of Russian newspapers of standing are free from corruption, and this means a great deal in a country where the average standard of commercial morality is not high.

In their growing tendency to sensationalism the newspapers again reflect a prevailing mood. Twenty or thirty years ago writers on Russia frequently described Russian towns as overgrown villages. But the transformation of these overgrown villages into cities is going on rapidly, and the simpler tastes of a slower time are being superseded by the fancies of a jaded city population. Music halls, café chantants, and all kinds of places of amusement are multiplying, and the cinematograph every night attracts its millions throughout the Empire. It cannot be said that a love of sport is developing in proportion with the passion for being amused, but football, yachting, and motor sport are certainly much more popular than they were, and Russia has had a very acute attack of the aviation fever. Journalism feels the change. The popular temper is unfavourable to a tone of sedateness and sobriety in the newspapers. There is a demand for smart feuilletons, snappy telegrams, and piquant news items. The *chronique scandaleuse*, and the sensational murder, and will forgery trials that have been so frequent during the last few years afford abundant material, and the Russian Press is perceptibly assuming a yellowish tinge. But there is a strong counter tendency in favour of

the maintenance of a stricter literary and ethical standard, and it is very curious to watch the struggle. The struggle is particularly interesting, because Russia is so big that the Press will inevitably become an immense power as soon as the present limitations are removed.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTELLIGENTSIA

The Intelligentsia.

WHAT is the Intelligentsia? The word itself, or some more or less adequate translation of it, is frequently met with in the discussion of Russian public affairs, and it is difficult to understand a great deal in Russian character and politics unless the intelligentsia be taken clearly into account. It is practically a separate class that goes under the name. To describe it as the educated or the literary class is not sufficient. An "intelligent," or member of the intelligentsia, is not merely an "intellectual" either. He is that and something more, and sometimes he is not quite that. There are points of resemblance between the Russian intelligentsia and the literary and professional class in other countries, in Germany, France, Italy, and especially in England. The German romantic movement of the early part of the last century, certain aspects of the French Bohème, Fleet Street, Grub Street, the Labour and Women's Suffrage Movements present many analogies with the Russian intelligentsia, but there is nothing altogether like this class in any part of the world. Whereas the intellectuals of other countries enter more or less completely into the life of their environment and conform to its rules and customs, the life of the Russian intelligentsia has been hitherto a constant protest against the existing order. The distinguishing feature of the intelligentsia was not that its members wrote books and articles or discussed literary and social questions, but that they did this in the name of a higher political and social order that was to replace the existing order. Everything they did was permeated with the desire for liberation, for reform. The nature of the reform required was conceived of differently at different periods and by various groups. Some dreamed of Russia as a

land of self-governing communities, of true-hearted Orthodox Christians under the aegis of the autocracy, others wanted to make Russia into a federation of Communes without the autocracy, others proclaimed a reign of science and reason, denounced all tradition, and, on the strength of such manuals of crude materialism as Büchner's *Kraft und Stoff*, declared poetry, art, and personal beauty to be mere instruments of reaction. Some advocated Agrarian Socialism, a later generation preached Marxian Socialism.

It is the subordination of all intellectual effort and indeed of personal habits to a supreme interest in social reform that gives the Russian intelligentsia its peculiar colouring, that constitutes its strength and its weakness. And it is just this characteristic that makes it possible to mark off the intelligentsia with precision from the rest of the community. Not every literary man was an " intelligent," though in certain of his habits and moods, perhaps, even in his convictions, he might present many points of affinity with the intelligentsia. Tolstoy was certainly not an intelligent, though at one time he associated with the literary men in St. Petersburg, wrote in the " thick journals," and engaged in fierce disputes on general topics. But the type did not appeal to him, and he rarely described it in his novels, approaching it only when a class that did interest him—the country gentlemen, for instance, as in *Anna Karenina*—happened to be in a frame of mind corresponding with that of the intelligentsia, and argued hotly on political questions. And Tolstoy's religious views were repugnant to the majority of the intelligentsia, just as the intelligentsia habit of mind was repugnant to him. Turgeniev, again, was not an intelligent. He was keenly interested in the intelligentsia, associated with, and frequently described in his novels, its members. His heroes, Rudin, in the novel of the same name, Bazarov, in *Fathers and Sons*, and most of the characters in *Smoke* are intelligents. But Turgeniev described them as an outsider, as a highly cultivated country gentleman who would never

quite consent to identify himself with the intelligentsia class. Dostoievsky again, was, and was not, an intelligent. He was a townsman, and lived like a typical intelligent, a restless, hand-to-mouth, irregular life, among debts and manuscripts, and with long nights of heated argument. Yet the intelligentsia did not claim him as its own, and not until many years after his death did it fully and ungrudgingly recognise his genius.

In fact literary or artistic genius or a devotion to literary and aesthetic, rather than to social and political interests, very frequently had the effect of placing a man outside the pale of the intelligentsia in the strictest sense of the word. This section of the community bore the character of a religious body rather than that of a literary class. Its attitude resembled that of the Puritans and their successors, Quakers, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists. It had a Nonconformist conscience. Only the ideal pursued was not that of the salvation of the individual soul—for nearly four decades the majority of the Russian intelligentsia did not believe in the existence of the soul—but the salvation of Russia, the salvation of the people. It was an ideal of social and personal liberty that demanded constant personal service and the subordination of all other interests to its attainment. It involved intense humanitarianism, an enthusiastic attachment to the common people, because they were common people, because they were poor, oppressed, and suffering. "From those who exult and foolishly chatter and dye their hands in blood," wrote Nekrasov, the typical poet of the intelligentsia, "lead me away to the camp of those who are perishing for the great cause of love."

Ethical fervour, constant devotion, even in the darkest days of oppression, to an ideal of political and social redemption, immense personal sacrifices, contempt for the goods of this world—these were the noble qualities that gave the intelligentsia its power and constitutes its claim to profound respect. These were the qualities which, together with a

genuine and unflagging thirst for knowledge, a delight in ideas for their own sake, a restless and widely-ranging mental activity, and a desire to impart enlightenment to the weakest and the humblest, made the intelligentsia the pioneers of Russian development during the last century. As against the hard mechanical conception of the despotic state, the corruption of the bureaucracy, and the systematic suppression of personal initiative, the intelligents' self-sacrificing insistence on the necessity of knowledge, justice, and liberty, and on high ethical and social values had the force of a sturdy and resolute witness-bearing. The members of the intelligentsia were constantly imbued with the sense of a mission. Some were revolutionaries, some carried on clandestine propaganda in Russia, others worked and organised abroad. But the majority remained at home and worked openly. Of these some sat in the cities, taught in schools and universities, wrote in the " thick journals," read German, French, and English science and philosophy, argued, disputed, criticised. Others worked in the Zemstvos as doctors or agricultural experts, or as school teachers in the villages, or opened little libraries for the people whenever they could wring permission from the Administration, carried on a constant struggle with the authorities on points of law in order to gain a little clear space, some slight opportunities for imparting knowledge to the peasantry, or for helping the suffering, worked devotedly in Famine Relief and served as doctors and nurses in time of war. Women worked side by side with men on a basis of complete equality, and frequently were leaders in organisation ; in fact, one of the remarkable features of the intelligentsia was the number of strong and able women it brought to the front. And in all the work predominated the feeling of a duty to be done, of a debt to be paid to the people. It was a kind of religious service, and this, though the majority of the intelligents demonstratively claimed to be atheists, and professed a rigid and uncompromising materialism.

Many of the defects of the intelligents naturally flowed from their qualities. Dogmatism, narrowness, and a censorious spirit were common. Frequently an idealist contempt for the goods of this world, and hostility to aestheticism, degenerated into personal untidiness and slovenliness in the conduct of personal affairs. Sincerity was often interpreted as meaning indifference to the amenities of social intercourse, identification with the interests of the people was often considered to mean not only the adoption of a peasant costume, but also an intentional roughness of manner. The bitterness of the struggle with the autocracy engendered intolerance, an impatience of others' opinions. And difference of opinion on political or literary questions was frequently regarded as morally reprehensible. The man who did not conform to the prevailing attitude of the intelligentsia was looked upon with suspicion, if he displayed indications of attachment to the Church or other traditional institutions he was shunned as a reactionary. Intolerance extended even to trifles. A few years ago a literary man, who happened to be a landed proprietor, brought his wife to a gathering of a radical literary group with which he was connected. His wife was coldly received, and it afterwards appeared that the cause of offence was that she wore diamond earrings.

Again the devotion of the intelligentsia to theory, especially to the latest philosophical and social theories of France and Germany blunted the sense of reality and made the average Russian even more unpractical than he was compelled to be through lack of any opportunity for action. He saw the march of events through a haze of hypothesis and logical syllogism. In long and noisy disputes around the samovar in rooms clouded with cigarette smoke he analysed political occurrences from various philosophical and sociological standpoints, estimating their significance from the point of view of a remote ideal, but very often missing their immediate impact on sensibility. An enormous amount of time and energy was wasted in solving mere verbal misunderstandings.

The intelligentsia tended to lose sight of colour, action, spontaneous movement, the play of the instincts, the simple elemental process of living. It evaded nature. It theorised even when of set purpose it returned to Nature and founded Tolstoyan colonies. The very simplicity of the intelligents' manner of life and their good-natured habits of mutual help freed them from the insistent pressure of economic demands in an extreme form. They lived remote from the world, as it were, on an island. It was never absolutely necessary for them to be business-like, and the conditions were not such as to encourage habits of punctuality. There was even a prejudice against a business-like habit of mind, it was considered petty and "bourgeois," and indicative of an excessive desire for material welfare. Theory dominated over life, and profoundly influenced personal habits, dress, the training of children, the relations between husband and wife. It even influenced the speech of daily life, making it bookish, abstract, and colourless, depriving it of that wealth of imagery which makes the language of the Russian common people a delight to hear. The dominance of sociological theories also affected literary taste, and works of art were judged from the standpoint of social utility, rather than from that of beauty. "Aesthetics are the Cain who killed his brother Abel, Ethics," declared the critic Mikhailovsky, who for many years held sway over the minds of a large proportion of the Russian intelligentsia. Critics paid attention mainly to the political and social content of the works they studied, demanded realism pure and simple, and condemned the play of fancy. In a popular *History of Literature*, published a few years ago, considerable space is devoted to the discussion of the social and political ideas in the work of the poet Alexis Tolstoy, an aristocrat and a lover of beauty, who held aloof from politics. Chehov, a shrewd, sceptical, and talented writer of short stories, who was bored by the "thick journals," and shunned the intelligentsia, died in 1904. In 1906, after the promulgation of the Constitution and the formation of

political parties, a literary critic in a public lecture, discussed the question as to which party Chehov would have joined if he had been alive, and came to the conclusion that he would probably have been a Constitutional Democrat.

Sometimes the reign of dogma, the habit of holding reality at a distance by means of theory led to a certain insincerity. The very gregariousness of the intelligentsia made this inevitable. There was a great deal of mere lip allegiance to current doctrine. By no means every member of the intelligentsia did his thinking for himself; many lived solely on borrowed ideas, and frequently disputes were a mere bandying of authorities. Mikhailovsky, Chernishevsky, Marx, Engels, Spencer, Buckle, Nietzsche were names that constantly did duty for arguments. And then human nature would have its way in spite of dogma. To wear evening dress would have been considered by most members of the intelligentsia an indication of degraded bourgeois taste. But it was one time the custom among literary men not to shave, and to wear the hair long, and some were distinctly foppish in the attention they paid to their coiffure. Many in their sturdy democracy refused to wear starched shirts, and preferred the blouse as worn by the Russian peasant and working man. But an inextinguishable aesthetic instinct displayed itself in the choice of striking colours for the blouse or in embroidery on the breast, at the waist or on the fringes. And when a girl student wore her hair short and incessantly smoked cigarettes, she did so not simply to defy convention, but because in her set it was the thing to do, just as in another set which she abhorred, it was the thing to go to balls and wear evening dress. It would be a mistake, too, to imagine that gatherings of the intelligentsia were devoted solely to disputes on abstract questions. Three or four might argue hotly, while others would simply exchange impressions, or dutifully submit to be bored, or gossip as easily and as pleasantly as human beings gossip the world over, from Notting Hill to Hong Kong. The life of the intelligents

was simple, but not ascetic. Many members drank to excess, and there were some who drank themselves to death in search of a refuge from the terrible depression that hung constantly over the Russian educated man, and made the life of the intelligentsia essentially a sad one.

One may easily do injustice to the intelligentsia by emphasising certain of its aspects that lend themselves to satire and to caricature. Such aspects were sharply characterised by Turgeniev in his *Smoke*, and ferociously condemned by Dostoievsky in his novel *The Possessed*. The intelligentsia, though a distinct and separate class, was by no means altogether of a piece. There were extremists and moderates, there were various parties and a great diversity of types of character. The Symbolist writers and advocates of Art for Art's sake, who made their appearance towards the end of the nineteenth century, were members of the intelligentsia, although they were violently attacked by the prevailing school. So were many Slavophils, and convinced and deeply religious supporters of the Church, and opponents of philosophical materialism. In the homes of some members of the intelligentsia there was a gracious and soothing tradition of real culture combined with a refinement of manner that was the more charming because of its absolute sincerity. In other homes there was occasionally a depressing crudity of thought and speech and a noisy self-assertiveness. But all members of the intelligentsia were united by a common temper, by a profound sense of life as a problem, and by a constantly thwarted and baffled desire to find ultimate solutions.

The intelligentsia occupies, or has until now occupied, such a strictly delimited position in Russian life that it must, as has been pointed out, be regarded as a distinct social class. Officially there are five classes in the Empire, the gentry, the merchants, the clergy, the *mieschhane*, or petite bourgeoise, and the peasantry. In the early part of the last century literature was almost exclusively the business of the gentry,

but from the sixties onward representatives of the other classes, students of theological seminaries, artisans, merchants' sons, and peasants gathered round the literary monthlies and took their place among the intelligentsia. The University system adapted by the Government from the German system made it possible for most clever youths who had succeeded in fighting their way through the secondary schools to pass through a course of higher education, and it was the universities which filled the ranks of the intelligentsia. The development of higher education for women, the opening of Women's University Colleges and Medical Schools largely increased the number of women in the literary and professional class. Not only were various social classes represented in the intelligentsia, but there was a sprinkling of non-Russian nationalities. There was a considerable number of Jews, and there were also Little Russians and a few Poles, and a certain number of Armenians and Georgians. The intelligentsia also included Government officials of Liberal or Radical views, and, in fact, there were a good many points of contact between the bureaucracy and the intelligentsia. Those same higher educational institutions which constituted a recruiting ground for the intelligentsia, gave the Government a constant supply of officials. And in certain respects the intelligentsia's habit of mind was akin to that of the bureaucracy, especially in its abstract character, its faith in the virtue of words and formulas, and of schemes set down on paper.

In writing of the intelligentsia the past tense is almost unavoidable, because of the great changes that have taken place in the class during the last few years. The Revolution brought the intelligentsia into rude and sudden contact with reality, put its dogmas and doctrines to the severest possible test. Doctrines were brushed aside by elemental forces, and instincts dulled by an inveterate habit of generalisation failed to respond adequately and decisively to the startling appeal of facts. The intelligentsia has been bitterly blamed for the failure of the Constitutional movement and for the

triumph of reaction, but it would be unfair to make it responsible for what was largely historically inevitable. Considering the enforced isolation from real life to which the intelligentsia was condemned in the pre-constitutional period, it is difficult to see how it could have developed in a high degree the qualities of practical efficiency. It was only in the Zemstvos and Municipal Councils that it had an opportunity for administrative training, and it is significant that it is the Zemstvos that have given some of the most capable and practical workers in the broad field of Imperial politics.

But in any case the political turmoil of the last ten years has made the Russian intelligentsia something very different from what it was. It has lost its exclusiveness. It is no longer so distinctively a class apart. Its members engage more frequently in practical work. Some are deputies, some have gone into business. In spite of the reaction, a steady social and economic development is in progress, and in this development the intellectuals are taking their share. Hundreds are living in exilé or in banishment abroad, and over such the traditions of the pre-constitutional period still have a strong hold. Faith in many of the dogmas of the intelligentsia has been profoundly shaken, and perplexity and a spirit of scepticism prevails. And at the same time certain new tendencies are making themselves felt, nationalism as opposed to the once prevalent cosmopolitanism, a new sense of the State as opposed to the former negative attitude of the intelligentsia to the State as an organism, and to State action of every kind, and also a growing respect for religious sentiment in its various manifestations as opposed to the agressive materialism that was once so common. Political parties have, to a certain extent, taken the place of the intelligentsia and the intellectuals seem little by little, in spite of very unfavourable conditions, to be taking their place in a broader national life. They seem, in fact, to be in process of becoming intellectuals of the German or English type.

But the traditions of a century of lofty and disinterested

thinking, of loyalty to great ideas, of struggle and of sacrifice are still fresh and vivid, the traditions of the first Russian critic Bielinsky and his successors Dobroliubov, Lavrov, and Mikhailovsky, of that penetrating political thinker Herzen, of the tumultuous anarchist Bakunin, of Turgeniev and Dostoievsky and Tolstoy, and of the idealist Slavophils Aksakov, Kireev, and Homiakov. The band of high-minded, enlightened, humane, and keenly sensitive men who passed through the strange and bitter experience of living under an autocracy, while the Europe of the nineteenth century made its triumphant progress—these were the men who made the Russian intelligentsia what it is. And such an intelligentsia cannot wholly disappear, can never become exactly like the intellectuals of any country in the world.

CHAPTER V

CHURCH AND PEOPLE

"HOLY Russia," the Empire is called, and the troops of the Tsar are his "Christ-loving army." The slow train stops at a wayside station, and among the grey cottages on the hillside rises a white church hardly supporting the weight of a heavy blue cupola. The train approaches a great city, and from behind factory chimneys cupolas loom up, and when the factory chimneys are passed it is the domes and belfries of the churches that dominate the city. "Set yourselves in the shadow of the sign of the Cross, O Russian folk of true believers," is the appeal that the Crown makes to the people at critical moments in its history. With these words began the Manifesto of Alexander II announcing the emancipation of the serfs. And these same words were used by those mutineers on the battleship *Potemkin* who appeared before Odessa in 1905. The symbols of the Orthodox Church are set around Russian life like banners, like ancient watch-towers. The Church is an element in the national consciousness. It enters into the details of life, moulds custom, maintains a traditional atmosphere to the influence of which a Russian, from the very fact that he is a Russian, involuntarily submits. A Russian may, and most Russian intelligents do, deny the Church in theory, but in taking his share in the collective life of the nation he, at many points, recognises the Church as a fact. More than that. In those borderlands of emotion that until life's end evade the control of toilsomely acquired personal conviction, the Church retains a foothold, yielding only slowly and in the course of generations to modern influences. Or it may happen, and often does happen, that the intelligent in his eager intellectual search,

The Church.

in his ardour of social service is suddenly caught away by a current of religious feeling which combines with nationalist instinct to draw him back into the Church. A strangely complex institution is the Orthodox Church and very subtle are its influences.

A Russian heads his letters with a date thirteen days later than that recognised by the rest of the civilised world simply because the Church, on purely traditional and irrational grounds, insists on the maintenance of the Old Style. He may protest against the anachronism, and if he has strong feelings on the subject he may use the New Style as well as the Old, heading his letters with such a complex date as December 28, 1912, January 10, 1913. But he cannot abandon the Old Style for the simple reason that it is observed in all public transactions, in banks, and Government offices. A high school boy may be a devoted admirer of Nietzsche or Marx, but he knows perfectly well which saints' days in the year mean a whole holiday. The average Russian intelligent does not dream of going to church on Sundays, and of priests on the whole he has an exceedingly poor opinion. But at certain important moments of his life he invokes the Church's aid. He goes to church to be married, and before marriage confession and communion are necessary. The priest christens his children, and every Orthodox Russian bears the name of a saint, Greek, Jewish, Roman, or Russian. And when he dies priest and deacon again come into his home and sing a mass for the repose of his soul, and afterwards, with solemn and touching ceremony commit his body to the ground. There is one great festival of the year in which all Russians, whatever be their standing or opinions, joyfully take part. Nowhere is Easter celebrated with such tremulous intensity of feeling as in Russia.

But it is just because the Church occupies such a conspicuous position in public life that it is difficult to determine the real attitude of the people to religion. The Russian people seem decorously and deeply religious. A cabman

bares his head and crosses himself when he passes church or shrine. A merchant in a tramcar will suddenly cease reading the city column in his morning paper and bow and cross himself reverently because of a passing funeral. In every cathedral in St. Petersburg and Moscow at all hours of the day, women are kneeling before the sacred pictures, bowing to the ground and whispering endless prayers. A Russian peasant crosses himself before and after eating, crosses himself when he sets out on a railway journey and before he retires to rest. In nearly every Russian house ikons or sacred pictures hang in the corners, and before them tiny lamps with floating wicks are constantly burning. But over against these facts stand others equally characteristic, such as the prevalence of drunkenness, and the fact that not in England, France, or Germany is it possible to hear in the public streets such an astonishing variety of bad language as in Russia. In attempting to define the Russian people's attitude to religion one may easily slip and stumble. But of its attitude to the Church as an institution the routine of daily living gives abundant illustrations.

The Village Priest.

In its most intimate connection with the people the Church is represented by the village priest far more than by metropolitan, archbishop, or archimandrite, and infinitely more than by the Holy Synod with its lay Chief Procurator. The village priest represents the living continuity of ecclesiastical tradition. He has not an easy life. He receives a salary paid by the Treasury through the Synod of from about £15 to £30 a year. He has a parsonage and glebe land, sometimes barely enough for a vegetable garden, sometimes enough to keep a horse and a few cows on, and to grow produce for sale. The salary is eked out by various fees from the parishioners, amounting in all from £50 to £90 a year according to the size of the parish. For a christening peasants pay from sixpence to a shilling, for a wedding from a pound upwards. But the priest must provide out of his own pocket for the lighting of

the church for the wedding and the warm wine that bride and bridegroom drink after communion. And if the birth certificates of the pair are not in the priest's keeping and have to be copied from the registers of another parish he must have them copied and forwarded at his own expense. For a funeral the fee is from six to ten shillings. And then there are endless small fees. Three times a year, at Christmas, Epiphany and Easter, the priest makes the round of the parish, and holds a short service in every house. For each visit he receives from threepence to a shilling. For the mass sung for the repose of the soul which the relatives order on the twentieth or fortieth day after the decease, the fee is from fourpence to sixpence. For every service, in fact, held by the priest at the request of the parishioners, over and above the regular services on Sundays and the appointed Church Festivals, he receives a trifling fee. Under such conditions the questions of fees may easily become a source of friction between priest and parishioners, and it is not surprising that the village priest is often close-fisted and grasping.

Questions of ways and means, of kopeks and roubles harass the village priest continually. The fees he receives he must share with the deacon, for every priest in holding a service must be aided by a deacon, or an unordained assistant called a *psalomshchik* or cantor, who chants the responses. But the priest's wife helps him to solve the economic problem, for, as a rule, she is an excellent housekeeper. The clergy form a caste apart, priests and deacons marry the daughters of priests and deacons, and it very often happens that an old priest on retiring passes his parish on to his son-in-law. The priest's wife brings with her a tradition of good housekeeping that has been handed down in the families of the clergy from generation to generation. She knows well how to bake the cabbage or meat pasties that *batiushka*, the Little Father loves, how to cure ham, to salt cabbage and cucumbers, to make all kinds of jams, kvass, cherry, raspberry and black currant brandy, and birthday cakes and

sweets for Easter. She sews and embroiders blouses for the boys and dresses for the girls, and sees that all the children have warm felt boots in the winter, and the boys high leather boots and the girls shoes in the summer. The family is always a large one, and means are very limited, but somehow the *popadia*, the priest's wife, manages to make ends meet, and her cheerful bustle and constant forethought make the problem of life, which for the village priest is not at all metaphysical, but consists in an unceasing pressure of petty cares, less harassing than it might otherwise be. If she dies leaving little children, the lot of the widower is a hard one, for the Russian priest may not marry a second time.

The children's education is well provided for. After learning the elements from father or mother at home or in the parish school, the boys are sent to the head town of the government to the School for the Sons of the Clergy where they are educated free of charge, and the girls to the Eparchial or Diocesan School for Girls where teaching and board are also free. The instruction given in these schools is very ecclesiastical in character. Modern languages are not taught, but a great deal of attention is paid to Church Slavonic, Church Music, Divine Service, and Church History. The boys are educated with a view to their becoming clergymen, and the girls with a view to their becoming clergymen's wives. From the School for the Sons of the Clergy the boys may pass into a Theological Seminary where they are trained for the priesthood. But only a small proportion of priests' sons follow their father's profession. Many become clerks in various Government offices, some either by their own efforts or aided by their father's scanty savings make their way to the University or Technical Colleges and so into the various lay professions. The number of seminarists who enter the priesthood is lessening year by year, and the question of filling the vacancies is becoming a serious one in many parts of Russia. Priests' daughters after leaving the Eparchial School either return to their homes, where they stay until

their marriage with some young deacon or priest, or else become teachers in the parish schools or in the Eparchial School itself. Some break through the magical ecclesiastical circle and go to the cities to continue their education in the Women's University College or Medical College, or in one of the numerous *Kursy*, courses of lectures or higher schools, pedagogical or technical, or in language schools, in dentists', nurses', or medical assistants' training schools. And then they become country school teachers or doctors, or find themselves suddenly deported to Siberia for having joined a socialistic organisation, or simply marry a student and share his adventurous lot.

The priest's home life is full of cares and anxieties, but it makes him very human, gives him a very real sympathy with the cares of his peasant parishioners which are, after all, in their petty, harassing, economic character, very like his own. But there are the broader cares, the business of the parish, the care of souls, and these lie heavily upon the zealous pastor. The ways of his ministry are definitely appointed and strictly regulated. His duty is to be the faithful instrument of a complex tradition. First of all he has regularly to hold service in the little parish church and in outlying chapels. But to hold services is not a simple matter. Walking down the village street in a low-crowned hat and blue cassock with a cross on his breast, bearded, long-haired, he is simply the village "pope," *Batiushka*, the Little Father, Father Nikon, Vasili or Michael. But when he enters the church, dons his robe of cloth-of-gold, and the altar doors open, and he comes out before the assembled congregation chanting and swinging a censer in the smoke of which the sacred pictures in their glittering frames take fantastic forms, and the shadows within the altar become full of mystery, then Father Vasili becomes another being, a priest, with powers of which some intimation is given in the sad, sweet, slowly rising and falling tones of the choir, the familiar but solemn Slavonic words of the prayers and the sonorous responses of the deacon.

The Church touches the peasants in some way hard to define. They stand in rows, the men on the right, the women on the left, with folded hands, listening to the music and chanting, and gazing at the sacred pictures of the Saviour, the Madonna, St. George, St. Nicholas the Wonder-worker, or the worn, stern, ascetic face of St. Sergius Radonezhsky. They bow and kneel when the priest bids them do so, and often bow and cross themselves when a wailing note in the music, a name, a phrase in the prayers makes a sudden appeal. Sometimes the women or a pilgrim near the door kneel and bow ecstatically, touching the floor with their foreheads and whispering, *Gospodi pomilui* (Lord have mercy). The priest closes the altar doors and disappears from view, opens them again and reads the gospel for the day, turns his back to the congregation and bows low before the altar. There is no break in the service, choir and deacon take up the burden when the priest's voice ceases, and in that world of strangely vibrating and plaintive utterance the peasant congregation is held for two hours or more until at last the end of the mass is reached, and the priest advances holding out the Cross, and the parishioners throng round to kiss it and to receive a blessing.

Rarely does the village priest preach a sermon or attempt to make the church service a vehicle of religious instruction. The mass is a direct appeal to the emotions, and what the congregation chiefly demands from the priest is that he shall "serve well," that is to say, that he should have a good voice, a good ear, and that he should be able to carry through without blundering the complex ritual with its incessant demand for vigilance in detail. A good priest must be able to serve well not only in the routine of low masses, but in high masses on the great festivals, in the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great and other Lenten liturgies, and in the Christmas and Easter services. It is the Easter service that puts on the village priest the heaviest strain. For six weeks he has been fasting, refraining absolutely from meat, eggs, and milk

A FIFTEENTH CENTURY VILLAGE CHURCH, PAPERTNO
(*Novgorod Government*).

products, and rarely eating fish. There are many extra services in Lent, and he must confess his parishioners one by one. Holy Week is the most difficult week of all with its incessant prayers and its atmosphere of deep gloom, and when Easter Eve comes Father Vasili is thin and pale and his eyes have a febrile brightness. Winter is over, ice and snow have melted, the trees are still leafless, the fields black and bare, and the wind is chilly, but there is a sense of coming Spring in the air. The service begins two hours before midnight. All the peasants of the neighbourhood are there, and the schoolmaster, the village tradesman, the gentry of the parish and, it may be, a few passing artisans and tramps. Up till midnight the music is low and dreary. Then there is a restless movement. Every member of the congregation lights a candle. Youths fire off guns on the church steps. The priest and deacon advance toward the door, peasants grasp the ikons and church banners, and with candles, ikons, and banners, and with singing the congregation walks out into the churchyard and in procession around the church. Before they re-enter the priest cries, "Christ is risen." The congregation answers, "He is risen indeed!" The choir breaks into joyful singing and the happy mass of Easter morning begins. After the service is over the priest must bless the *kulichi*, Easter cakes, and the *paskha*, a sweetmeat made of sour milk, eggs, and sugar, which the peasant women have brought to church with them. Then come the days of visitation and feasting, long journeys from village to village, with prayers in each cottage, and here a glass of tea with *kulich* and *paskha*, and there a glass of vodka, so that often at the end of a long day from weariness and from much eating and drinking after the long fast priest and deacon are barely able to mumble the words of the prayers.

So the year goes round with its long calendar of fasts and feasts in all of which the priest must take the leading part. There are four great fasts, Lent, which lasts seven weeks, including Maslanitsa, Butter or Carnival Week, when, though

milk, butter, and eggs are permitted, meat is forbidden; the fast of the Assumption of the Virgin, which lasts two weeks, the fast before St. Peter's Day, and the fast before Christmas, which lasts from November 14 until Christmas Eve. The priest must observe these fasts even if others are negligent, and he must also fast weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays. Then there are the extra services, on the day of the patron saint of the village, for instance, or in time of drought when priest and peasants go into the fields to pray for rain, or on a day on which the village community has vowed to hold service in honour of a saint who has stayed an epidemic among the cattle or in some way brought an answer to prayers. There are prayers to be said, too, when the cattle are driven out to pasture in spring, and there are name-days when special services are sometimes ordered by the more well-to-do families, and *panikhidy*, or masses for the repose of the souls of the deceased, and *akathists*, or hymns in honour of the Saviour, the Virgin, and the Saints, to be sung on special occasions. To carry out the purely ritual duties of his profession is for the village priest no light task.

Another important part of his duties is to explain the meaning of this ritual. It would be a mistake to imagine that the peasants' experience in the Church is nothing more than a vague, aesthetic emotion. They have certain religious conceptions which are formed partly from words in the service which they vaguely understand, more rarely from the reading of the Gospel and lives of the saints, partly from the floating mass of custom and legend, and partly from direct instruction. Instruction is given by the priests to the children in the parish schools maintained by the Holy Synod, and also in the Zemstvo schools and those maintained by the Ministry of Public Instruction. In these schools the children are taught to read Church Slavonic when they are barely able to read Russian, which is very much as though English children were taught to read Wycliffe's Bible in the infant

classes. Church Slavonic is a slightly modified form of the Bulgarian language as spoken about the ninth century in the neighbourhood of Serres in Macedonia, and as used in the translation of the scriptures made by the Slavonic missionaries, Cyril and Methodius, and in the services of the Orthodox Church. The alphabet is different from the Russian, and there are many words, grammatical forms, and phonetic combinations which are not to be found in the Russian language. Church Slavonic as taught in the parish schools certainly does not develop the intelligence of Russian children, but some learn enough to catch a good many fragments of meaning in the words of the Church Service. The priest gives instruction in Catechism and Church History, too, but it is only a rare pastor who succeeds in making these dry bones live. The religious instruction given in the schools is, as a rule, a numbing, deadening thing, and probably contributes far less to the formation of the people's religious conceptions than the reading of the lives of the saints or the stories of wandering "brothers," or the talks of pilgrims during long journeys on foot to the great shrines. For the Russian people talk about religious questions, are perpetually interested in them, in some restless, probing way of their own.

The personal character of the priest counts for a great deal in the life of the parish. "Like pope, like parish," is a Russian saying. Sometimes priests are hopelessly ignorant and stupid, and hold their position in spite of obvious incapacity only through the protection of powerful relatives. Sometimes they give way to drink and, as a rule, priests do not by their example encourage abstinence in their flocks. In the North priests have the reputation of being grasping, and in the South where parishes are smaller and glebe-lands larger and more fertile, they are accused of indolence and moral laxity. The average priest is neither conspicuously devout nor conspicuously negligent. He is a hearty fellow with a broad accent, rather overburdened by the cares of

his office and by family cares, not keenly intelligent, but shrewd, observant, with common sense and humour. He is not interested in theoretical questions, is sincere in his religious beliefs, takes the world as he finds it, and feels thoroughly at home in it, and able to enjoy its good things when they come to him. Often he subscribes to a city newspaper and follows in his evening leisure the course of events in the big world. He has the peasant's liking for foreign politics and is always glad to launch into a vague and placid discussion of the Panama Canal question, or the plans of the German Emperor, or the Suffragette movement in England. There are not a few priests who delight in their office, who are full of a warm and simple faith, and who toil in poor parishes all their lives long without any other object than that of doing good. The wonder, considering all the conditions of service, is not that there are so few good priests, but that there are so many of them.

For the position of the village priest is greatly complicated by his relations with his superiors and with the outside world generally. He is under constant observation, is subject to perpetual interference. His immediate concern is with the *Blagochinny*, or superintendent, usually the incumbent of a large and well-to-do parish, who has oversight over several neighbouring parishes and keeps watch over the behaviour of the priests, inquires into their complaints, examines the parish registers, and investigates the financial affairs of each parish, which are managed by the priest in conjunction with an elective church elder and a parish council. On all these matters the *Blagochinny* reports to the bishop of the diocese or his assistants. Sometimes appeal is made directly by parishioners to the bishop in the head town of the government. But the oversight of the *Blagochinny* concerns not only the spiritual and economical affairs of the parish. It has a political object also. The Russian Church is subject to the State. Above the village priest is a hierarchy of canons, bishops, and archbishops, and the three Metropolitans

of St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kiev. But this hierarchy is under the control of a lay institution, the Holy Synod, into which Metropolitans and Bishops enter as members, but of which the Oberprocuror or Chief Procurator, a layman, and member of the Cabinet, is the head. There is a striking contrast between the German title for the Minister for the Church and the traditional Byzantine terminology employed in ecclesiastical ritual. The Synod is, in fact, a foreign institution. It was established by Peter the Great in connection with his general reform of administrative institutions and was formed on Protestant models. The office of Patriarch, who was head of the Russian Church during the Moscow period, and who occupied a position corresponding with that of the Patriarchs of other autocephalous Eastern churches was abolished, experience in Moscow having demonstrated that the power of the Patriarch might rival that of the Tsar. And Peter, who was determined to maintain the authority of the State at all costs, forced the Church into the rigid framework of his bureaucratic system. It was characteristic of him that in the ancient monastery of St. Michael in the Ukraine he set the Imperial arms, the double-headed eagle, above the golden cross that surmounted the cupola.

The Church has thus become a bureaucratic institution. And the village priest is made constantly to feel that he is not only a servant of the Church, but a subordinate member of the bureaucracy, a Government official. He is responsible for the conduct of the parish school, for instance, which is maintained by the Holy Synod. But the parish school is frowned on by progressive people in the neighbourhood, and the priest often comes into conflict with Zemstvo employees and country gentlemen on this account. Often, too, the priest is compelled to play the part of an informer. If there is a Zemstvo school in his parish he must note the behaviour of the teacher, report on his or her political opinions, give warning to the authorities if the teacher lends books freely to the peasants or converses with them on political subjects.

If the young men of his parish display public enterprise, organise a fire brigade or a co-operative society, it often happens that the priest is set to watch their movements and to place impediments in their way. The position of the priests has been especially trying in this respect during the last few years of political conflict. They are constantly associated with the uriadniks or rural policemen in the suppression of manifestations of political sentiment disagreeable to the Government. The priests are torn between the fear of endless conflict with their parishioners on political grounds, and the fear of incurring the displeasure of their superiors. Many simply obey orders, become informers and zealous members of the reactionary parties, and try to secure their position within the parish by arousing fanatical reactionary feeling among the peasantry. The better men suffer bitterly in a perpetual conflict between conscience and administrative compulsion. Political pressure on the priesthood reached its culminating point in the electoral campaign of 1912, when the Holy Synod, in order to secure a reactionary majority in the Duma, mobilised the priests in support of the reactionary candidates. The plan failed because a great many priests, shocked at the profanation of their office for electioneering purposes, simply voted as they were told not to and risked the consequences. In all four Dumas priests have been among the deputies, but those who, in the first two Dumas, spoke or voted against the Government—like the devout and earnest Viatka priest, Father Tikhvinsky, who in the name of Christianity protested against capital punishment—have been unfrocked as a penalty, and have, with great difficulty, made their way into other professions. In the Third and Fourth Dumas most of the priests have been members of the reactionary parties.

The position of the village priest is typical of that of the whole of the Russian clergy. There are differences of wealth and position. In the country the priest's life is very like the peasant's. In small towns he has to do almost

exclusively with artisans, small tradesmen, and minor officials. In the larger towns his lot is thrown among the merchants, who hold fast to traditional observances closely interwoven with ecclesiastical ritual. Then there are differences determined by the character of various towns. The priest in charge of some ancient chapel in the sleepy, deserted city of Novgorod naturally leads a life very different from that of the incumbent of a parish in a busy, modern seaport like Odessa. In districts where other confessions are strongly represented, in Catholic Poland, for instance, amongst the Mohammedans on the Volga, or in districts where dissent prevails, the office of the Orthodox priest assumes a militant nationalist character. In the capitals, again, the priests live the hurried, nervous life of a cosmopolitan world. The incumbents of the larger churches receive a good income, while the cathedral clergy prosper greatly, as may be easily seen by comparing a haggard and unkempt country deacon with one of the stout, florid, broad-chested deacons of the Kazan Cathedral. A deacon with a good sounding bass was, until recently, almost in as great demand in the cities as an opera singer, and was paid incredible sums for singing the responses at weddings in wealthy merchants' families.

The parochial priests are called the "white clergy." The "black clergy" are the monks, and between the two there is a striking difference. Monasteries have played an important part in Russian history. The fierce self-mortification of the monks of the Kievo-Pechorskaia Lavra, founded in 1062 in Kiev, deeply impressed the imagination of the Southern Russians and contributed to the spread of a strongly ascetic form of Christianity. In the north-eastern forests monasteries were the chief centres of colonisation. A hermit retired into the forest to devote himself to prayer and fasting, disciples gathered around him, and the fame of his miraculous powers attracted people from the settled region, until gradually a village or town grew up, the forest was felled and the soil

Monasticism.

brought under cultivation. The new monastery in its turn sent out colonists farther afield, and so the process continued indefinitely. Of great importance as a colonising centre was the great monastery of the Trinity not far from Moscow, founded in the fourteenth century by St. Sergius Radonezhsky. A very large number of monasteries were founded in and around Novgorod and many of them are still in existence. At one time the monasteries promoted literature and learning; monks translated devotional works from the Greek, or transcribed Bulgarian translations, copied and illuminated manuscripts, and wrote historical annals. Then came the inevitable moral decline. Peter the Great and Catherine took strong measures against the monasteries and convents and largely reduced their number, but Alexander I reversed this policy. During the nineteenth century the Government at intervals encouraged the development of monasticism, probably in the hope that it would serve to buttress up the traditional system.

The monasteries still play an important part in the life of the Russian Church for two reasons. In the first place many of them are objects of popular veneration on account of their historical associations, or on account of the miracle-working shrines, the relics of famous saints which they contain. Nearly all the older monasteries were the scenes of the labours of one of the hundreds of saints in the Russian calendar, or contain an ikon that, according to legend, miraculously fell from heaven—as, for instance, the Iberian Madonna in a monastery on an island in Lake Valdai—or one that shed tears of blood, or, turned back from a town an invading army, as did the Madonna at Pochaiev in Volhynia when the Tartar hordes were advancing. In the course of centuries a body of legend has gathered around these shrines, endless stories are related about their miracle-working powers, and the Madonnas of Kazan, Tikhvin, and Pochaiev have a powerful hold on the popular imagination. And every year to all these shrines pilgrims come flocking, yielding to that

impulse to wander, that centuries of roving over the plain have made a part of the Russian nature. Mile after mile the pilgrims tramp, men and women, by forest and river, in rain and sunshine, carrying black bread with them or begging shelter and food by the way "for Christ's sake." They gather at the shrine and kiss the relics, and weep and pray, and feel themselves wrapped and safely guarded in a national tradition that brings heaven nearer. They exchange news and impressions, argue about religious matters, develop their shrewd philosophy and let fall curiously wise sayings.

There are dark sides to the picture. Vagabonds join in the throng and cheat and delude the unwary. And the conduct of the monks in charge of the shrine often has a depraving effect. Pilgrims come to a monastery on the eve of a festival, and find the monks sleeping off the effects of a drinking-bout, while the precincts of the monastery are a scene of licence. In the morning the monks, dirty and bloated, come out in procession with ikons and banners and the pilgrims stupidly follow them into the church where ieromonachs, or monks in orders, blunder hoarsely through the mass. In some great monasteries like the Lavra in Kiev, the monks systematically exploit the ignorance and simplicity of the worshippers. And generally in the monasteries in or near the cities the idea that monks live a strict, devout, and noble life seems to be an exploded fiction. The curious thing is that the people seem to take the laxity of the monks for granted, and continue to venerate the shrines in spite of the surrounding demoralisation. Not all monasteries have been culpable in this respect. Much depends upon the firmness of the abbots or *igumeni*, among whom there are men of remarkable administrative capacity, and a considerable number of monasteries are free from reproach. The convents have a better reputation than the monasteries for industry and order.

Sometimes in the neighbourhood of a shrine lives a recluse of lofty character and great spiritual tact, to whom the

troubled and anxious come for advice and consolation. Such recluses, *startsy*, or elders, as they are called, were formerly to be met with much more frequently than they are now. One of the most famous was Amvrosiy (Ambrose) of the Optyn Monastery near Kaluga, the original of the elder Zosima in Dostoievsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Often an element of genuine piety is brought into monasteries by devout peasants who, after having lived honourably in the world, take the vows and retire to spend their last days in quietness and prayer. And for many nervous and harassed women convents serve as a home of rest. A merchant's wife will frequently prefer life in a convent to a sanatorium. As a rule, however, the life of monks and nuns is a dull, uninspired round of formal duties. The monasteries altogether considering their enormous wealth are amazingly unproductive. They support with a few insignificant exceptions no charitable institutions, maintain no industries except the manufacture of candles and ikons and the printing of ecclesiastical literature, and contribute no money for national purposes.

But for the Church they exercise a second important function. They serve as administrative training schools, recruiting grounds for the hierarchy. Bishops, archbishops, and metropolitans must be celibates, that is to say, they are members of the "black clergy," live in monasteries, or in houses that rank as such, and are appointed from among archimandrites and abbots. Thus the married clergy are governed by celibates who in their turn occupy prominent positions in the bureaucracy and are subject to lay authority. The double function of the monasteries has a curious effect on the hierarchy. On the one hand, they are guardians of customs that deeply impress the popular imagination and awaken religious feeling. On the other hand, they provide administrators who occupy their place in a strictly co-ordinated bureaucratic system. The result is that the ritual function of the monasteries is subordinated to administrative

THE METROPOLITAN VLADIMIR OF ST. PETERSBURG

objects, and the appeal to the popular imagination is carefully calculated and regulated so that it may further those political ends that the bureaucracy has in view. The working of this system was shown in a curious way in Volhynia a few years ago. The Archbishop of Volhynia, Antony, a very able and energetic man, and Archimandrite Vitaly, of the Pochaiev Lavra, also a man of restless energy, were both ardent supporters of the old regime and strongly hostile to constitutionalism. Amongst the throngs of pilgrims who came to worship at the shrine of the Madonna, they tried to promote a violently reactionary popular movement. In a fanatical young monk called Iliodor (Heliodorus) they found the agitator they needed for their purpose. Iliodor's fervid eloquence, his violent attacks on Jews, constitutionalists, and revolutionaries, strangely combined with denunciations of landlords and capitalists generally, had an electrifying effect on the crowd. Iliodor's fame spread far and wide, and he did actually succeed in evoking a strong reactionary movement among the more ignorant of the South Russian peasantry.

But the sequel was unexpected. From the Pochaiev Lavra Iliodor went to Tsaritsyn on the Volga, where he continued his denunciations of the enemies of the Tsar and true religion. Immense crowds gathered around him, for his eloquence seems to have been inspired by sincerity. His preaching became more and more democratic in character, he pleaded the cause of the people not only against the intelligentsia, journalists, and revolutionaries, not only against landlords and wealthy tradesmen, but also against officials, governors, and ministers. And finally he began to denounce the Holy Synod—still in the name of the Tsar. The Synod took measures against Iliodor, but he was supported by the Bishop of Saratov, a turbulent ecclesiastic named Hermogen. And it was with the utmost difficulty that the Synod finally succeeded in having Iliodor arrested and conveyed to an obscure monastery, where, after several months of reflection, he

finally seceded from the Orthodox Church. His patron, Bishop Hermogen, was removed from the Saratov see. This attempt to use the religious fanaticism of the masses as a means of combating the revolutionary movement ended in the religious movement assuming a revolutionary character. So startling and unexpected are the manifestations of mass psychology in a time of unrest.

The Church authorities were largely concerned in the organisation of the reactionary parties, the union of the Russian people and others, which by their excesses, their participation in the anti-Semitic riots and massacres, and their extreme violence of language in the Duma, in their meetings and in their Press organs, have given the saddest possible demonstration of the results of using the Church as a political weapon.

Religious Emotionalism.

There is in the Russian people a capacity for religious emotion which the official Church with all its wealth of tradition and complexity of ritual fails wholly to satisfy, and which seeks an outlet in all kinds of irregular ways. Sometimes these ways are tacitly recognised by the usage of the Church and do not lead to open conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities. There are the pilgrimages to the shrines, for instance, with their halo of romance and adventure. Sometimes in the towns may be seen a *strannik*, or wanderer, a man who in time of sickness, or in sign of repentance for crime has taken a vow of perpetual pilgrimage from shrine to shrine. Barefoot, often bare-headed, with iron-tipped staff in hand, he tramps year after year from north to south and from east to west until death comes. Often such men are sternly and fanatically religious, but often enough they become simply jolly, careless tramps who love the open road for its own sake and feel thoroughly at home among professional vagabonds. Occasionally the *strannik* preaches or sells tracts or books of devotion. There are often wanderers who collect money for the building or restoration of churches. Such a man may

be a peasant, who, when his wife has died and his sons have grown to manhood, feels impelled to abandon worldly cares and to spend his declining years in religious service.

The thirst for something more than is given by the ordinary routine of church services finds satisfaction again, in the sermons or counsels of popular preachers, either priests or laymen. Besides the preaching gift such a preacher may, like the famous Father John of Kronstadt, have a gift of healing, and then he attracts an enormous number of followers. With such movements the Church authorities have difficulty in coping because they inevitably tend to assume an irregular and sectarian character. Father John was a consistent supporter of the State and the official Church, but his followers, the so-called Johannites, have simply revolted against Church discipline. In all parts of the country there are brothers to whom the common people constantly come for guidance and healing. Recently in a remote corner of Bessarabia, on the frontiers of Roumania, the preaching of a monk named Innokenty evoked such enthusiasm amongst the Moldavian peasantry of the region, that the civil authorities in alarm arrested Innokenty and exiled him to a northern government, whither in the depth of winter, with babes in arms, devoted adherents followed him. In St. Petersburg and Moscow there are several " brothers " whose names are popular among the common people. Occasionally lay brothers secure an astonishing influence in the higher circles of society and at Court, and indirectly exercise political influence.

But religious emotion continually breaks the bounds of the official Church and finds expression in the sects. Russian dissent is one of the most interesting manifestations of Russian popular feeling, and is quite as characteristic as any political movement. Until April, 1905, when the Tsar issued his Toleration Edict, the lot of dissenters was a bitter one. They were subjected to persecution, were regarded as enemies of public order, their places of worship were closed

or carefully watched by the police, frequently their leaders were imprisoned and exiled, and they themselves transported in whole communities. All the powerful apparatus of the State was brought to bear against them. There was a time when schismatics were burned at the stake, and the sum total of the dissenters' sufferings represents a very real martyrdom.

Dissent.

The most important religion outside the State Church is that of the *Raskolniki* "Schismatics," "Old Ritualists," or "Old Believers," who seceded from the official Church in the seventeenth century. There are no people quite like the Old Believers in all the world. They seceded from the powerful official Church and endured cruel persecution, not for any doctrinal reasons, but because they preferred misprints and mistranslations to correct translations, because they preferred the older spelling of the name "Jesus," and because they insisted on making the sign of the cross with two fingers instead of three. The movement arose owing to the attempt made by the Patriarch Nikon in the reign of the Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich to bring the ritual and the literature of the Russian Church into conformity with the Greek originals, and to correct errors of translation and interpretation that had crept in through sheer ignorance. It was against these perfectly reasonable innovations that the Old Believers raised vehement protest. They wished to retain the old forms absolutely intact, and condemned Nikon's revision as a heresy akin to the Latin heresy, which after the occupation of Moscow during the Time of Trouble by Roman Catholic Polish troops the common people regarded with especial antipathy. In its essence the Old Believers movement was a conservative revolt; it was as though English people were to hold indignation meetings and form a separate Church in defence of the Authorised as against the Revised Version of the Bible. The leaders of the Old Believers were persecuted, and the movement rapidly grew through

persecution. It assumed a democratic character, it became a protest against arrogant authority, a protest against those representatives of the State who persecuted "traditional Christianity," and openly supported heretics, in the long run a protest against the State itself, involving a belief that the Tsar was antichrist. The movement was ennobled by suffering, details of ritual unimportant in themselves gathered far-reaching heroic associations and became symbols of profound emotions. The old books, the old ikons, the old prayers and words and forms became the more precious because worldly powers denied them, and because their retention involved a continual sacrifice of comfort, ease, and physical security.

The Old Believers fled to the forests of Eastern and Northern Russia and founded new settlements where they might worship in peace. But they were scattered and with difficulty maintained mutual intercourse. The separation from the official Church raised problems of dogma and practice which it was not easy to solve. The Old Believers had no bishops of their own, and the question of the ordination of priests was one of almost insuperable difficulty. The difficulty was surmounted for a short time by winning over priests of the Orthodox Church, but this was no permanent solution. Some decided that no priests were necessary; and these became known as the *Bezpopovtsy* or the popeless ones. The *Bezpopovtsy* in their turn split up into a variety of sects, for the religious emotion aroused by the Old Believers movement and the peculiar conditions in which they lived led to endless disputes in theological questions, and to the constant appearance of new leaders, and the formation of new sects, or "interpretations" (*tolky*). The extremists amongst the Old Believers, the *Bieguny* or *Stranniky* were convinced anarchists, denied the State absolutely, refused to have any intercourse with the authorities, rejected passports, and were, in consequence, condemned to a life of wandering, of constant escape from the police; hence their

name of *Bieguny* (runners). The Old Believers lived in an atmosphere of legend, dark superstition was very strong among them, they retained unmodified old popular beliefs in evil spirits, and persecution added to their life a peculiar rigidity and gloom.

But they were men of conscience, lived very strictly, refrained from smoking, fasted often, and were extremely methodical in all their dealings. The consequence was that, like many other persecuted communities, they, as soon as the persecution became less severe, began to prosper exceedingly. They built up large businesses, and helped each other regularly as members of such close communities always do. A great many of the wealthiest merchants and manufacturers in Moscow now are Old Believers, and a prominent member of the community is M. Guchkov, the leader of the Octobrists in the Third Duma.

The *Popovtsy*, that large section of the Old Believers who recognise the priesthood, were placed in serious difficulty in the forties of the last century by measures which, by preventing their winning over priests from the official Church, threatened them with a complete cessation of the administration of the sacraments. They averted the danger by founding a bishopric beyond the frontier at Bielaia Krinitsa in Galicia where a small monastery of Old Believers existed. A Greek bishop named Ambrose was brought from Constantinople to occupy the see, and by this means the succession was maintained. Other Old Believer bishoprics were founded in Roumania and Turkey, and in the course of time in Central Russia. The system thus established is called the Hierarchy of Bielaia Krinitsa. The restrictions imposed on the Old Believers were gradually relaxed during the course of the last century, but missionaries of the Orthodox Church were very active in combating the schism. The Toleration Edict of 1905 removed the last impediment, and an act passed in 1910 finally regulated the position of the Old Believers. The attitude of the official Church and

ST. JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH, UGLICH
(*Yaroslavl Style*)

administrative practice do not, however, readily conform to the new legislation. At the end of 1912 the whole community of Old Believers was shocked by an act of bitter intolerance committed by a police official in the Government of Archangel. On the grave of the priest Avakum, the leader of the Schism in the seventeenth century, who was burned at the stake, and who is one of the most remarkable figures in Russian history, the Old Believers, confident in the measures guaranteeing liberty of conscience, erected a simple cross. This cross the police official broke into small fragments which he forwarded together with a report to the governor of the province.

The Old Believers are a particularly interesting community because they preserve so many distinctive features of the Russian life of an older time. They have old ikons which are of great importance for the study of Russian art. Their mode of speech, their domestic habits, their superstitions serve as historical and ethnographical documents. With the spread of education the sterner tenets of the community are losing their hold upon the younger generation, and there is a strong tendency to adapt religious practice to modern conditions. With increasing tolerance on the part of the official Church this would seem to threaten the gradual disappearance of the Old Believers as a distinctive community. But at present the work of the leaders of the modernising movement, as represented by their organ, *Tserkov* (The Church), constitutes an interesting attempt to maintain the continuity of Orthodox tradition apart from those official influences which mainly determine the policy of the State Church.

The Old Believers who recognise the priesthood are a variety of the State Church. Not so the Bezpopovtsy, the popeless ones. With the Bezpopovtsy begins the passionate wandering of Russian dissent in search of final truth in fields forbidden by the law, by convention and by tradition. It is a strange and desperate adventure, full of dangers, physical and spiritual, full of the joy of discovery, full of the suffering

that is the price of devotion, and of the peace that is its prize. The company of wanderers finds a home in the forest, some new interpretation of scripture, some modification of ritual that seems to solve all doubts and to shine with an intimate, sheltering light of attainment. They settle and build. But restless spirits among them are not satisfied and seek further, testing the resources of prayer, the powers of the spirit, refusing to conform to the ritual of past inspirations. Again and again the past gains on them and makes their new revelations, their new ordinances habitual, unoriginal, traditional in their turn. Their successors accept their word blindly, just as the conformists in the world they had forsaken accepted the word of great teachers of the past instead of seeking direct inspiration. But each little group was persecuted. It was not allowed to grow worldly in its sectarianism, to find in its creed an easy substitute for faith. The dissenters found joy in suffering, rest in endless wandering, and again and again rejected the tranquillity of attainment to pursue some light of lights beyond ever receding horizons. What wonder that they often lost the appearance of common men and seemed possessed by strange powers, and that again and again their spirits were broken by the excess of their yearning? It is the same yearning that is the distinguishing mark of Russian literature, and the spirit that impelled the dissenters is very nearly akin to that spirit that impelled the devotees of popular enlightenment and political liberty.

Who are all these wanderers, these men and women who bear strange names, the *Pomoriane*, *Fedoseievtsy* and *Filipovtsy*, the *Bieguny*, *Stranniki*, *Molokane*, *Dukhobortsy*, *Khlysty*, *Skoptsy*, *Shtundisty*, the New Israel and the non-prayers, mystics and rationalists, ritualists and protestants, wrestlers with the Spirit and mortifiers of the flesh? They deny each other fiercely, as fiercely as all of them deny the State Church, and each clings fast to the little lamp or to the smoking torch that for him lights a way through the

darkness of this life. But the Bieguny, the Runners, are the prototype of them all, those Bieguny who have no abiding city for they seek one to come. It is true that even these inveterate protestants against Church and State have now largely lost their energy of resistance, that only a few of them now live up to the full extent of their creed and take monastic vows and wander in the forests refusing to have any traffic with the representatives of a State that they consider to be a manifestation of Anti-Christ. Most of them compromise, and live and do business in the world, sheltering their more resolute brothers and sisters if need be, and only going through the formality of an " escape " from the world on the approach of death. But the spirit of their teaching is expressed in their hymns and poems, in poems about young Prince Ioasaf or Iosafat, who left family, wealth, and kingdom to seek the truth in solitude and prayer—a form of the Buddha legend which has found its way to the northern forests—or else in such verses as these :—

" O who will set the fair wilderness before me,
And who will build for me in a still place where no man dwelleth,
That I may not hear the sound of the voice of man,
That I may not see the loveliness of this world,
That I may not behold the vanity of the enchantments of this world,
That I may not desire the glory that comes from man ?
Then would I bitterly weep for the heavy sin that is in me."

The Bieguny have gone to the extreme of denial. They run ever that they may grasp the prize of their calling. The other popeless Old Believers who believe that the latter days have come and grace has departed from the earth are less vehement in their repudiation of the world. The Pomoriane, or Dwellers by the Sea—by the White Sea, that is, in the Governments of Archangel and Olonets—will not eat and drink with " unbelievers " for fear of defilement, and refuse to recognise marriages contracted by clergymen of the State Church. But they include in their services prayers for the Emperor, for reasons of expediency, it would seem, rather than of principle. Indeed they are gradually abandoning

those bare crags of principle, firm based on which the earliest teachers of the sect, the monks of the great monastery of Solovki in the White Sea for seven years in stubborn defence of the old ritual against Nikon's innovations defied the besieging troops of the Tsar, or that grim principle in the strength of which so many of the Pomoriane sought victory over the world in self-martyrdom, committing their bodies to the flames. The world is putting new questions to which they cannot easily find an answer. The great cities draw their members from the villages amidst the northern forests, they are claimed by the factory that levels all distinctions of dress and custom, they are compelled to eat and drink with unbelievers. But if any Pomoriane are so defiled they cannot join in public worship. Disputes arise, and at last the workmen assert their right of initiative, organise a community of their own, and hold services in a shed on the outskirts of St. Petersburg. Then there is the difficult question of marriages. It is better for a man not to marry, declare the Pomoriane, marriage is only a concession to the flesh. But if you begin to make concessions you must regulate, and gradually a large number of Pomoriane have come to recognise marriage as an institution but not as a sacrament. And now the greatest difficulty of all besets them. They hold that grace has departed from the earth and that Antichrist reigns. But the State which they have hitherto regarded as the embodiment of Antichrist, has ceased to persecute them, has given them liberty of worship. What then? Perhaps grace has not wholly departed, perhaps a true priesthood is still to be found on the earth. And the popeless ones are earnestly debating the question as to whether they should not reunite with those communities of Old Believers who recognise the priesthood. Has all their suffering, all their faith, their teaching been in vain?

Many groups of the Old Believers are bound by fetters of tradition, and in fruitless disputes over books and ritual dissipate their strength. In a village of Old Believers there

will often be several groups or sects, perpetually at war among themselves, so poor are they that they are compelled to have one house of prayer in common, and so bigoted that each group purifies the house anew after a service has been held by any of the others. Khlysty, Skoptsy, Dukhobors, and Molokane are Bezpopovtsy, popeless ones, who have revolted against the letter of the law and claim, each sect in its own way, the liberty of the spirit. The Khlysty and Skoptsy live in a strange world of symbols and ecstasies, of allegory and new revelation, of antinomianism and of fierce trampling on the flesh. They tread paths that many mystics have trodden in their perilous journey in the infinite dark, mystics of the early Church and of the Middle Ages, mystics in America and in Persia, in the Protestant world and Mohammedanism. They are fascinated by the terrible problem of sin and salvation, they are tossed unrestingly on the sea of a perpetual conflict between flesh and spirit. Both Khlysty and Skoptsy seek redemption in the ecstasy of mystical communion, but while the Khlytsy do not restrain the flesh, often seem to regard concession to the flesh as an element in ecstasy, the Skoptsy shrink from it in horror; they are eunuchs who interpret with terrible literalness the passage about those who make themselves eunuchs " for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake." How these sects arose, how peasants in remote Russian villages evolved these curious systems of dogma, these ritual dances, this language of symbols it is not easy to understand. Perhaps human nature tends to manifest itself in similar forms under similar conditions, and the teaching of Khlytsy and Skoptsy may simply be a natural development of the general revolt against ecclesiastical and political authority which was carried on by the Bezpopovtsy. But it seems hard to resist the impression of a genealogical connection with older heresies. The Bogumil or Paulician heresy made its appearance in Russia soon after the introduction of Christianity, and the close connection between the early Russian Church and Bulgaria, from whom Russia

received the translation of the scriptures and many religious books, facilitated the penetration of Bogumil influences eastward. The Russian Church stamped out the heresy as resolutely as the Roman Catholic Church stamped out in the West that of the Albigenses who were also of Bogumil descent. But it probably survived in obscure corners of the popular mind as a reminiscence, a tendency, and naturally sprang to life again during the time of religious excitement aroused by the conflict between the State Church and the Old Believers. Is there a connection between the religious dancing of the Khlysty, held with tightly-closed and padded doors and windows in rooms at the back of St. Petersburg courtyards or in peasants' cottages on the Volga, and the services in secluded gardens at the head of the Golden Horn of those Paulicians whose massacre was ordered by the Empress Theodora? Is there a possible connection with the dancing Dervishes of Pera? The Paulicians were Manichaeans; Manicheism was disseminated in Persia and Turkestan, and its influence was felt in the mystical sects of Islam. And with the perpetual impact of the Mohammedan East on the growing Russian State strains of Manichaean, Paulician, dualistic influence could easily find their way northward. If the influence of Persian art is noticeable on some of the ikons or sacred pictures of the Moscow period, it seems natural to trace in popular beliefs signs of Oriental influence.

But it is far to follow the long routes of belief and custom. The Khlysty are convinced that they have seen with their own eyes a heavenly vision, and that to them are continually vouchsafed new revelations. They have wholly abandoned Orthodox doctrine. They believe in the pre-existence and transmigration of souls. "In the flesh I am sixty-four years old," said a Khlyst woman on trial, "but my true age, the years I lived before I came into this world, I know not." They are dualists, they affirm the existence of a perpetual warfare between flesh and spirit. But at the same time

they insist that God is present only in Man, that from the Creation, He, the Invisible, the Intangible, Unattainable, has chosen man for his dwelling-place. This is what their opponents call "the deification of man." Christ, they hold, was the most perfect embodiment of divinity that the world had seen until his advent. But many christs have appeared since then, and the leaders of the Khlysts, the perfect ones amongst them, are called "christs." Perhaps the name Khlyst, which seems to refer to the practice of flagellation may simply be a distortion by outsiders of the name "Christ," which is in such frequent use in this sect. And while the male leaders, various Ivans and Porphirys, are called "christs," the shrewd, firm-willed women leaders, the Akulinas and Aksinias, gain the name of *bogoroditsy*, madonnas, or "Mothers of God." Church marriages are not recognised, and if a man will marry he must take to himself a spiritual wife.

All these "christs" and "madonnas" are surrounded by a hierarchy of "archangels," "angels," "prophets," and "saints," members of the communities of the Khlytsy or Skoptsy. The community of believers is a "ship" on the sea of life, or it may be on some river Don, on which the "little ships" of individual lives go sailing; the elder is a "steersman" or "steerswoman." The ship sails over the blue sea, but is not drawn into a whirlpool, for the Lord himself enters the ship, takes the sail into his hands and sits at the helm, so that though the seas roar and be troubled the ship shall not be broken. Or again, the community is a "garden" or a "vineyard," where cypress trees grow with "red flowers," "royal flowers," where birds of paradise build their nests and sing the songs of the cherubim and the seraphim. Through the garden flows from Mount Zion a river of living water with banks of silver and yellow sands. And on this river again the King's ship goes sailing with warriors and seamen and Cossacks of the Don who play on the lyre of David for the marriage of the Captain of Hosts who takes

as his bride, Golgotha, the Cross. But round the garden is the dark forest of the world, and the birds who fly beyond the shelter of the garden are lost in its gloomy depths. In the midst of their grey, cheerless lives, with one of their number watching outside the door to give warning if the police should come, the Khlysty sing of bringing sweet apples on a golden dish to a high house and begging the lady, the Empress, the guest and Mother to accept them. Many of these symbols the Khlysty and Skoptsy have in common, for the Skoptsy are an offshoot of the older sect and represent a reaction against the laxity of the Khlysty at the end of the eighteenth century.

In ordinary life the Khlysty are hardly to be distinguished from their neighbours. All their emotion, all their ecstasy is concentrated in their religious exercises, when gathered together behind closed doors, they sit dressed in white, and by reading and singing awaken the slumbering flame. They strike up a swift, tripping song about the little ships that go sailing, they grow restless, and first one and then another steps out into the midst and begins to dance, panting and jerking the shoulders from side to side, shuffling and whirling. They dance in pairs, in groups, or all together as a "ship," following each other in a ring, or as a "wall," again in a ring, but jumping together in unison. Sometimes they fall into such a frenzy that they lash themselves with bundles of twigs. And frenzy is said on occasion to lead to licence, an accusation, which, though it is repudiated by the Khlysty, constitutes the chief ground for the severe measures of the Government against the sect. Khlysty and Skoptsy are officially classified as the "most dangerous sects."

Perhaps it is a longing for religious ecstasy—the same longing that accounts for the fervour of camp-meetings and various forms of revivalism—that explains the comparatively wide dissemination of the Khlyst teaching in Russia and its persistence in spite of persecution on the one hand, and the spread of education on the other. Only a few years ago, in

1905, during the time of political unrest, a new Khlyst prophet or " christ," arose and, by the proclamation of a new revelation, the advent of a new era, attracted a large number of adherents, chiefly among the Kuban Cossacks in the Northern Caucasus. This prophet, Lubkov, a shop-assistant, and apparently a man of low intelligence, was able by bribing the officials to hold meetings without let or hindrance. He travelled from village to village and farm to farm announcing that he was the " christ of the twenty-first century," in other words, the twenty-first christ after Jesus, and that he had come to found a New Israel. He ascended a mountain near Kislovodsk where he professed to have been transfigured, led his followers to a hot and unfertile " promised land " in Transcaucasia, on the borders of Persia, and finally went off to South America where he intended to found a colony for his adherents.

The Khlysty outwardly conform to the State Church and expend their energy of protest in religious ecstasy. The Dukhobors, Molokans, Stundists, and followers of Sutaiev seek truth in another direction. They relegate metaphysics and ritual to a secondary position and emphasise the ethical aspect of Christianity. Clean living is for them the secret of salvation, and the ethical code of the Gospel must be the standard of life. There are mystical elements in the teaching of Dukhobors and Molokans, but they place in the forefront faith in Christ interpreted as complete obedience to his commandments. The " Molokans," men who feed on the " pure milk of the word," as they explain their own name, or people who drink milk during Lent as the Orthodox slightingly say, were once simply a variety of Bezpopovtsy; but their steadily increasing reverence for the Bible as a rule of faith has brought them to a Protestant position, and they are now not unlike Baptists. The Dukhobors or Spirit Wrestlers have suffered imprisonment, stripes, and exile because of their devotion to the doctrine of non-resistance which caused them to refuse military service. They are

Christian anarchists and communists, and the story of their martyrdom for the ideals of primitive Christianity troubled some years ago a world that is not quite sure whether it is Christian or not, and, if it is, how it is to reconcile with the Gospel the whole structure of modern civilisation. Universal brotherhood, peace, love as the supreme law of life, these are the essential features of the doctrine of the Dukhobors, just as they are of Quaker teaching, and their firmness in obeying the inner voice not only brought down on them Cossack reprisals and material ruin when it led them to refuse military service in Russia, but it baffled even very liberal-minded Canadian authorities when it led to a refusal to register title-deeds to the land on which the emigrant members of the sect settled in 1899.

The Dukhobors were a comparatively small sect, but it is remarkable how often teaching similar to theirs has made its appearance quite independently in various parts of Russia. The same thing occurs repeatedly. A peasant begins to think for himself about life, reads the Bible, ceases to attend Church services and revere ikons, professes non-resistance, and refuses to take oaths or to undergo military service, becomes, in fact, a Christian anarchist. Why religious inquiry should so frequently take this form in Russia it is not easy to say. Perhaps there is obscure diffusion of certain teachings that it is difficult to trace. Perhaps the antinomian conceptions of the Bezpopovtsy exert an influence in all sorts of unsuspected directions. There may be traces of Protestant influence. Or again, it is possible that a certain anarchist strain in the Russian nature, a reaction against the excessive pressure of the authority of the Church and State may account for the spread of non-resistance teachings. The Stundists, who made their appearance in Southern Russia after the emancipation of the peasantry, were strongly influenced by German colonists of the sect of the Nazarenes who were settled in the Government of Kiev, and German Mennonites had an influence in other governments. The

refusal to undergo military service led in all cases to severe persecution, and persecution naturally inspired in the non-resisters a burning zeal that infected others. There was a joy of self-denial in the doctrine, a sense of release from the fretting claims of the world that made suffering a light thing to bear. Then, when Leo Tolstoy, whose lifelong spiritual conflict was so distinctly and titanically Russian, found rest at last in the simplicity and the doctrine of love and non-resistance as confessed by Dukhobors and the followers of the peasant Sutaiev, when he turned his back on the splendours of his own works of art, obeyed the call of the fair wilderness and set himself to preach his interpretation of the Gospel in the form of a challenge to the whole of modern civilisation, it was the fiercely protesting spirit of Russian dissent that spoke through him, the spirit of the men who threw themselves into the flames rather than obey a state that was for them the embodiment of Antichrist, the spirit of the wanderers in the forests, of the Bieguny and of the Dukhobors. By what mysterious sub-conscious ways did the doctrine penetrate Tolstoy's powerful spirit? He was strangely sensitive to the breathing of the Russian soil, to the voices of the forest, to the spirit of vague restless yearning that the winds bear across the great plain in their wanderings from the north and the east and the south. The soul of the Russian people in which so many influences mingle and blend and grow, influences that are pagan and Buddhist, and Manichaean and Christian, and in their unity altogether Russian, he understood, not by sympathy merely, but by some subtle community of feeling, as though his soul were part of a broader folk-consciousness whose waves move unrestingly within him becoming his private experience, the distress and the joy of his individual soul. That is why Tolstoy was so dear to the Russians and why his death so deeply stirred them, even though the logic of the educated classes learned in the schools and in European Universities raised a barrier between him and these. The later Tolstoy

and Russian dissent are intimately akin. They are wayfarers and pilgrims in search of a city that is very far off.

The force of Tolstoy's example naturally strengthened all the sects of non-resisters during the later years of the nineteenth century, and his doctrine had a certain influence upon the intelligentsia. Instances of refusal to undergo military service were frequent, but of late years less is heard of such cases, and the quietists of all kinds seem to have lost ground heavily during the revolutionary period. Not a few Tolstoyans in the general fever of unrest became Socialist Revolutionaries. And the forms of dissent that are now making headway seem to be those that have been imported from Europe, chiefly several varieties of Baptists known under the general name of Evangelical Christians. Since the promulgation of Toleration laws in 1905 and 1906 the Western European sects have made considerable progress, although they are still harassed by administrative impediments and are unable to secure from government officials anything like consistent observation of the principles of tolerance. The missionaries of the State Church combat them in public dispute, as well as by causing the exercise of administrative pressure. Probably the progress of the Evangelical Christians may be regarded as one manifestation of that process of the Europeanisation or perhaps even the Americanisation of Russia which is now going forward so rapidly. The Russian tradesman who abandons his kaftan, cuts his hair short, and wears a collar and tie may, under certain conditions, be led by religious interest to sing in a Baptist meeting a translation of "Shall we gather at the river?"

A certain development of new sects has been noticeable of late years in the large cities. They arise chiefly within the State Church as a result of the popularity of certain preachers or leaders. The Johannites, or followers of Father John of Kronstadt, are a sect of this kind, and so are the followers of "brother" Ivan Churikov in St. Petersburg,

and his Moscow associates, who have gained great influence among the common people by their denunciations of drunkenness and immorality and their appeals for decency. These movements are hardly sects in the strict sense of the word. They are as yet in the stage of currents of popular feeling on which the State Church frowns. But with the growth of the great modern cities, St. Petersburg and Moscow, religious movements in Russia are beginning to assume that nervous, hasty, noisy character which is so characteristic of religious movements in modern Western cities. Up to the present the Salvation Army has not been permitted to extend its operations to Russia, and even if it had been it is probable that it would have failed because the types of mind to which the Salvation Army makes appeal hardly existed in Russia. It is very possible that within a few years such types of mind will be far more common than now, and then perhaps religious development in Russia will take new forms more closely resembling those prevalent in Western Europe. In the meantime all sorts of new teachers are making their appearance and gathering little bands of followers. There is the old man who wanders about the Nizhni Novgorod fair, for instance, and preaches that believers in his doctrine shall never die, and that death is simply a sign of want of faith. There are about thirty " immortals " who have accepted his teaching, but one of them recently passed away. And then there is the " Swallow " in St. Petersburg, who teaches that all the Christian States shall transform the world in 1924, and that a beginning was made when, in August 1912, the Archangel Michael solemnly annihilated all evil spirits somewhere in the neighbourhood of New York. It is characteristic of the new outlook that such a city as " New York " is mentioned in the sectarian teaching. In the hymns of the Khlysty and Skoptsy it is St. Petersburg and Moscow that have a symbolical meaning, and the coming of the Lord is awaited from the hills of Zion and the mountains of the Turkish land.

The authorities of the State Church make few concessions to the modern spirit, though after all when bishops and priests sit even on the Right benches of the Duma they are acting in perpetual contradiction to that denial of constitutional government which is the main theme of their public utterances. The deadening influence of officialism is felt in all departments of Church life. The chancelleries of the Holy Synod and of the consistories which represent the Synod in each diocese are exactly like the chancelleries of any other government department. The affairs of the Church are conducted by laymen, but not by parishioners *in corpore* or their representatives for whom the affairs of the Church would have a direct and personal interest, but by officials of the State. The prelates of the Church are subordinated to these officials: the principles that prevail in the bureaucracy in general prevail in the Church, and thus it happens that without actually wielding temporal authority the Church is at present dominated not by spiritual but by political interests, with sad results. No ecclesiastic of broad-minded or liberal views is admitted to a leading position in the hierarchy, and the process of eliminating men of marked individuality and talent has recently been extended even to the theological academies, institutions of University rank for the higher training of the clergy, from which a number of able, distinguished, and devout professors have recently been compelled to retire in order to give place to men of inferior capacity who had ingratiated themselves with the authorities. The leading organs of the Church, the *Tserkovnia Viedomosti*, and the daily newspaper, *Kolokol* (The Bell), edited by a missionary named Skvortsov, have a marked reactionary character.

Church Officialism.

Many devout Orthodox Russians deplore the state of affairs that now prevails in the State Church, and persistent efforts are being made to effect reforms. For years the ablest and most liberal-minded of the clergy have been discussing the possibility of freeing the Church from its position

of complete subordination to the State by bringing about the convocation of a Church Council and the restoration of the Patriarchate. This question was very eagerly debated in 1905 before the promulgation of the Constitution, but it was afterwards obscured by other urgent political issues, and only vaguely referred to from time to time. Another question that is frequently discussed in the organs of the liberal churchmen, the *Tserkovno-obshchestvenny Viestnik* (The Ecclesiastical and Social Messenger), published in St. Petersburg, and the *Tserkovnaia Pravda* (Church Truth), published in Berlin, is that of promoting the reform of the parish with the object of enabling parishioners directly to participate in the conduct of Church affairs. In the present transition stage of Russian politics, when the subject of the relations between State and Church, the Monarch and the representative institutions is the subject of constant dispute, it seems hardly probable that any far-reaching reforms will be effected.

New Developments of Religious Thought.

And yet in spite of the retrograde policy with which the leaders of the Church have become identified there are many indications of a growing interest on the part of the educated classes in the Church and in religious questions generally. The meetings of the Religious and Philosophical Societies in St. Petersburg and Moscow, in which are debated important questions bearing on the relation between religion and social life, attract large audiences and are well reported in the Press. The work of Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900) the most brilliant of modern Russian philosophers, in whose eyes philosophy was in the long run the handmaid of theology, is now making itself more and more widely felt. Vladimir Soloviev stands before the Russian intelligentsia now as the most striking example of a man of great learning, a poet, a bold and consistent liberal publicist who not only possessed a profound religious faith, but was devoted to the Church as an institution. Recently his letters and an account of his

life have been published by Professor Radlov, and an exhaustive analysis of his work by Professor Prince Eugene Troubetskoy. In Moscow there is a group of energetic scholars led by MM. Bulgakov and Berdïaïev who, having passed through many varied phases of modern thought, have finally reached a position similar to that of Soloviev and are devoting themselves to the work of elucidating the philosophical bases of orthodoxy.

Religious thought in Russia gives promise, in fact, of very interesting developments. It is a new conception for the bulk of the educated classes that religion, even if it be not accepted in some simple way, may at last be considered and studied, and not wholly ignored as a creed outworn. It is a sign of the times that one of the most widely-read, serious books of recent years is William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience.* The intelligentsia is not any more formally religious than it was, but it has at least relinquished its attitude of uncompromising hostility to religion and is no longer rigidly materialistic. The whole trend of thought in this respect is necessarily very vague, sharply defined dogmas of all kinds are out of fashion in Russia now, both in politics and in philosophy. So far one can hardly point to anything more precise than the removal of an inhibition on religious thinking.[1] But this means a very great deal and opens up all kinds of curious and fascinating possibilities. The hostility of the intelligentsia to religion was one of the chief causes that prevented a real community of feeling between the educated classes and the masses of the people. But now that Russian life is growing more modern, more European in character, the barriers between the intelligentsia and the people are gradually disappearing. And this is particularly true in the matter of religion. Not only is the intelligentsia becoming less pronouncedly anti-religious, but the religious attitude of the people is changing. Indifference is growing, and parallel with it a spirit of inquiry, so that while a great

[1] The recent rapid spread of such movements as Theosophy seems to be a symptom of a growing sensitiveness to European tendencies.

many of the younger peasants have simply turned their backs on the Church, and on religion generally, others are passing over into the sects or else finding satisfaction in various socialistic and humanitarian teachings. And this is one of the ways in which a new uniformity of national temper is being developed.

But as soon as one touches on the present religious temper of the Russian people a hundred interesting questions arise. What will come of all this complex process of the development of individual initiative, reading, education, modernisation generally? Will it undermine the Orthodox Church, or will it lead to reformation and transformation? Roman Catholicism is now fighting its battle in a modern world. But the Eastern Orthodox Church has not until now had to cope with modern conditions, and it is in Russia that it will have to undergo the strain, with what result who would venture to forecast? One can imagine the development of a perpetual interaction of religious and intellectual influences between the intelligentsia and the people, the country and the town. New religious movements arising among the people may attract members of the intelligentsia, now less immune against religious influences than heretofore. And new movements of religious thought amongst the educated class may find all kinds of strange echoes amongst the masses of the people. And in such movements all the latent variety of Russia will be made clear, the variety implied in such facts as that the Siberians have the reputation of being irreligious —though dissent is making rapid progress in Siberia—while the Little Russian is supposed to be especially sensitive in matters of religion. All the phases, all the potentialities of the Russian character will, in that time of outward levelling that must come with the extension of technical civilisation, be brought into more vivid relief. For there will be a far more intense and rapid interplay of thought and yearning on the vital questions that have perpetually and deeply troubled the Russian people throughout the long course of its history.

CHAPTER VI

LITERATURE

THE early 'eighties of the last century were a critical period in the history of Russian literature. The great writers who had gained distinction in the 'fifties and 'sixties were one by one passing away. Nekrasov, the most popular Russian poet of his day, died in 1877. Dostoievsky died in 1881, shortly after having given to the world his great novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*. Turgeniev died in 1882. Tolstoy published his *Anna Karenina* in 1876-7, and in 1881 experienced the profound religious change which caused him to abandon art and devote himself to the preaching and practice of the ideals that gave him peace. The Russian literature that has become famous throughout the world was written before the 'eighties. A great deal of it was contemporary with mid-Victorian literature, but how different it is from anything mid-Victorian! There is no cheerful sense of attainment, no exultation in achievement. Life for the great Russian writers is a spiritual adventure on a limitless plain. Nothing is fixed, stable, and final. The artist concentrates his attention upon a scene. With wonderful distinctness he notes contour, colour, and play of character. The scene represents a definite whole, a unity in itself. It contains the elements of everyday life, and the Russian artists with a firm hand place these elements in the foreground and do not evade any of them. They are realists in the sense that they describe what they see, conscientiously, because they have the conscience of great artists. But even when they describe scenes that are like cameos, set in the framework of fixed habit and convention, with the details minute and clear in the distant perspective of reminiscence—as in Turgeniev's beautiful idyll,

The Literature of the 'eighties.

"First Love"—the picture they give is at once complete and incomplete. Reality for them is suggestive as music is. One might say that reality is transparent for them, were it not that the comparison might obscure the remarkable vividness of the Russian apprehension of reality. The seen is suggestive of the half-seen and the unseen. The sight of things provokes to a wandering onward in search of something that is just out of reach, that may lie beyond the sunset and beyond the night, of a meaning that is perhaps unattainable. This is not necessarily mysticism, though with the gradual failure of artistic power it may lead to such undisguised mysticism as that of Turgeniev's *Klara Milich*. It is not a search for moral perfection, though the strange restlessness that pervades Tolstoy's novels did express itself in the author's later life in a fierce assertion of ascetic principle. It is not a philosophical inquiry, though the works of Dostoievsky contain profound philosophy. It is rather a fearless journey of clear-eyed discovery in the wide realm of Life—not of human nature only, but of the whole of Life in its immense variety. There is a refusal, tacit or expressed, to recognise final limits, or to accept provisional explanations, an eagerness to apprehend unusual aspects of human nature, to discover what man actually is in himself, and not merely what, in his laws and conventions, he says he is. Turgeniev did not revolt against limitations; he merely lost sight of them when, musing in the twilight of autumn evenings, he gazed from his seat under the lime trees across the boundless plain of life. For Tolstoy social and historical limitations were something vexatious, oppressive, something to be overcome with painful effort in the struggle to win perfect spiritual liberty. Dostoievsky saw limitations as part of the problem, that problem of the endless possibilities of sin and goodness in human nature which perpetually beset him.

The great Russian writers were impelled in their search not merely by artistic curiosity. And their interest was not morbid or pathological, though the search led them into

strange byways of human nature; and, though there is a note of sadness in all their work, from the wistful pensiveness of Turgeniev to the unsupportable gloom of many situations in the novels of Dostoievsky; they were impelled by a deep moral instinct, by a feeling of wonder and reverence for life. They were not moralists, they were artists. But to their artistic perception life was essentially moral, that is to say, it had a meaning and purpose, though the meaning might be elusive and hardly to be apprehended, though in its elusiveness might lie its attractive power, and though the pursuit of it might lead through dark mysteries of negation and sin. In any case the meaning of life was implicit in life itself. It was not something to be considered separately from life. And it is perhaps because of the persistency of this attitude that the greatest Russian thinkers have not been philosophers pure and simple, but novelists. Their passion for reality was such that they shrank from schemes and systems, but pursued the manifold windings of the problem of life with an artistic intuition that gave a far truer representation of reality than any dialectical scheme could possibly have done.

Causes of Decline.

It is not easy to understand precisely why this great artistic impulse ceased in the early eighties, why Turgeniev, Tolstoy, and Dostoievsky had no immediate successors. For one thing, there was a natural exhaustion consequent on intense literary effort, and it is more than a chance coincidence that the period of literary decline was also one of political reaction. Alexander II was assassinated a little more than a month after the death of Dostoievsky. The years that followed were years of severe oppression. The stirring life of the early 'sixties, the time of the Emancipation and the Great Reforms, was only a memory. The new generation had grown up in an epoch when the Government's steadily increasing hostility to reform was confronted by a developing revolutionary movement, one of the manifestations of which

was the assassination of Alexander II. Attention was diverted from literature pure and simple to political and social questions. The critics who had the greatest influence during the 'sixties and 'seventies—and whose influence is to a certain extent still. felt—were Dobroliubov and Pisarev, both of whom died, at an early age, in the 'sixties. Dobroliubov appreciated the aesthetic element in literature, but laid great stress on its political and social value. Pisarev went farther. He declared war on art which, he asserted, was nothing more than an attempt on the part of venal and cowardly architects, decorators, and painters to satisfy the whims of powerful capitalists. The society that cultivates the arts while it has beggars in its midst can only be compared, in Pisarev's opinion, with the naked savage who decks himself out with gaudy jewels. The only thing in poetry worth considering is the useful information it may happen to contain, not its form or music. That is to say, Pisarev was a Nihilist in literature, and the natural effect of his teaching was to deaden the aesthetic sense. The work of the more profound critics, Bielinski and Dobroliubov read in the light of Pisarev's, teaching, was interpreted as implying a complete subordination of literature to social and political ends.

And then there was the effect of the new teaching and example of Tolstoy, who, after writing *Anna Karenina*, acquired in the course of his passionate search for truth the conviction that art and poetry were a mere illusion. Tolstoy was not a Nihilist. He did not sympathise with any of the revolutionary parties. The Positivist theories that were in vogue among the intelligentsia in the capitals were distasteful to him. The solution he found for the problems that vexed him was a religious one. But his experience led him to a denial of art hardly distinguishable in its effects from the Nihilist position. And the force of his powerful example enormously strengthened those anti-aesthetic tendencies which, in the early 'eighties, cast their chilling shadow over Russian literature.

The fundamental explanation of the decline probably lies, however, in the increasing absorption of the nation's energies in the political struggle. And yet there were able men who even in this depressing atmosphere made great efforts to produce good literature. Among the older writers was Nicholas Leskov, a talented novelist who had gained a wide reputation by his clerical tales. Leskov revelled in the picturesque vernacular of the common people and in popular tradition and custom, and during the latter years of his life—he died in 1895—drew his subjects from the rich stores of early Christian legend. Gleb Uspensky, another prolific writer of fiction, was also keenly interested in the life of the people. But his interest, unlike that of Leskov, was predominantly humanitarian. He was deeply impressed by the sufferings of the peasantry, and in a long series of tales and sketches he described with great vigour and penetration the hardships of their lot. Gleb Uspensky was greatly influenced by the doctrines current among the intelligentsia of his day, more especially by those of the so-called Narodniki, or the Agrarian Socialist school, and the subordination of art to social ends expressed itself in his case in indifference to form, in a neglect of style. He frequently wrote simply journalese, the language of the "thick journals." The political atmosphere of the time had a melancholy effect on Uspensky's sensitive mind. He yielded to drink, and in 1893 he lost his reason.

Some Writers of Fiction.

No less melancholy was the fate of Vsevolod Garshin, whose work is steeped in the strange lunar light of a genius hovering on the verge of insanity. Garshin abandoned his studies in the St. Petersburg Institute of Mines on the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war in April, 1877, took part with great distinction in the campaign, was wounded, and wrote during his convalescence a military story entitled *Four Days* which, on its publication, attracted general attention. Garshin continued his studies in St. Petersburg and also engaged in literary work, but he was subject to strange fits of

melancholy, alternating with sudden bursts of exaltation. Once he found his way into the presence of Alexander the Second's famous Minister of the Interior, Count Loris Melikov, and implored him to win from the Emperor an amnesty for all offenders. Later he drifted about the streets of Moscow, consorted with beggars, and was finally picked up by the police. Brought to the Prefect of the city he besought this official, with pathetic earnestness, to devote himself to the service of humanity. He roamed about Russia penniless, preaching strange doctrines to the peasantry, and finally was lodged in a lunatic asylum in Orel. On his uncle's estate in the south of Russia he gradually recovered health, strength, and peace of mind. The last five years of his life Garshin spent in St. Petersburg where he secured employment under the Railway Board, married happily, and in long, quiet evenings wrote some of the best of his tales. But every summer his fits of melancholy returned, and finally, in the spring of 1887, dreading a fresh approach of insanity, he flung himself in despair down the stairs of the house he lived in and died of the injuries a few days after. The stories that he wrote fill only a moderate-sized volume, but they are of rare beauty. Garshin was an artist who, unlike many of his contemporaries, profoundly believed in art, and was drawn beyond himself by a blended ideal of moral and aesthetic beauty. His best stories, *The Red Flower*, *Nadiezhda Nikolaevna*, and *Night*, display a strong sense of form combined with a perception of glimpses of weird beauty caught in half-revealed abysses of shifting personality. The music of Garshin's work has the penetrating sadness, the passionate remoteness of ancient Russian Church music.

Gleb Uspensky and Garshin broke down under the heavy strain of their time. Michael Saltykov, better known by his pseudonym of Shchedrin, whose later work was written in the 'eighties, defended himself with the keen weapon of satire. In his earlier life Saltykov spent many years in the Government service, was employed in the Chancellery of the

Governor of Viatka, was an official at the disposition of the Ministry of the Interior for special missions, and later a Vice-Governor. In 1886 he retired and devoted himself entirely to literary work. His thorough knowledge of official life and ways, and the acquaintance with provincial manners gained in the course of his service gave him abundant material for political satire which he made use of in the form of fables, and allegorical novels and tales. By a dexterous use of language, often resulting in obscurity, he succeeded in evading the censor's pencil, and the biting sarcasm of his descriptions of various political types was a consolation to many during the oppressive period of reaction. Not a few of his characters and sayings have become proverbial. Some of the best of Saltykov's works, *Messrs. Golovliov*, *Letters to My Aunt*, and *Tales from Poshehonie*, were published between 1880 and 1886. Another well-known work, *Old Days in Poshehonie*, appeared in 1890, the year after the author's death. Saltykov's extremely idiomatic style and the obscurity of many of his allusions have prevented the translation of his work into foreign languages, and will probably have the effect of rendering much of his work unintelligible to future generations of Russians. At present, however, no portrait is to be more frequently met with in the homes of the Russian intelligentsia than that of Shchedrin—a massive head with long, straggling beard, deeply wrinkled forehead, and big, round eyes, shrewd and sad.

It would be hard to imagine a greater contrast to Saltykov than Vladimir Korolenko, whose *Dream of Makar*, a story of Eastern Siberia, aroused delighted surprise on its publication in 1885, and who has since then continued to occupy a distinguished place among the writers of Russian fiction. Korolenko, who is of Southern Russian origin, was exiled before he was thirty to the Yakut Region in Eastern Siberia, but was later allowed to settle in Nizhni Novgorod. For the last twenty years he has been editor of the magazine *Russkoie Bogatstvo* (Russian Wealth). There is no shadow of bitterness

in Korolenko's work. He is constantly compassionate, and while steadily opposing all forms of wrong, eagerly seeks the goodness in things evil. He is gentle, wistful, sensitive to natural beauty, and, above all things, full of pity for man. In his workmanship Korolenko is scrupulously careful; his published stories are contained in three small volumes, while those in manuscript, which he steadfastly refrains from publishing, would probably fill three times the number. They deal with the lives of humble folk in Eastern Siberia, the Volga region and Southern Russia, and are pervaded by a real and attractive humanitarian feeling, but they do not even suggest the depths reached by the great masters of Russian prose. The sincere respect Korolenko enjoys and the influence he wields are due rather to the engaging personality displayed in his writings than to their artistic merit. He has been well called " an artist as publicist, and a publicist as artist."

Anton Chehov.

Anton Chehov made his appearance in the 'eighties, when literature was sinking low. But the name of Chehov is in itself a denial of decline. He lifted decline on to the plane of art. He divested dullness of its banality. He discovered in a colourless, formless monotony of existence undertones of vibrating humanity. He lived in a period of extreme depression, but he did not even declare war on it. He did not assume any predetermined attitude to life. He took life as he, with his fine artistic perception, found it. There is a Russian word, *skuka*, which means boredom, and very much more than boredom—a sense of emptiness and insipidity of life leading to nerveless inactivity that may just stop short of being tragical, and recoils the more heavily upon itself because it fails to reach the poignancy of a tragical solution. This gloomily pervasive element in the Russian life of his time Chehov depicted with a masterly hand. He does not spare his readers, nor does he spare himself or reality. He does not set himself great problems, he rather shrinks from them.

He sees life piecemeal with the eyes of a sceptic, and it is characteristic of his temper that he wrote not novels, but short stories and tales. The first weapon with which he approached reality was humour, and his earlier stories were light, amusing sketches, published in comic journals. He never lost his humour, but it developed into a faculty of keen, dispassionate analysis, while with the years his practical common sense grew into large-hearted wisdom. The doctrinaire attitude he detested; he held aloof from the schools and disputes of the intelligentsia, and had a rooted dislike for the " thick journals." Chehov is like Maupassant in some respects, but there is a glitter in Maupassant's work that is absent from that of the Russian writer. Chehov charms by a sobriety of demeanour that lights up into subtle humour or suggests far extending wastes of hopelessness, but never permits of the blurring of a single outline. There are many who can describe life in Southern lands with their obvious picturesqueness and warmth of colour. It requires extraordinary skill to describe as Chehov has done the dreary vacuity of the Russian North in time of reaction.

Chehov was the son of a peasant turned shopkeeper, and was by profession a doctor. These circumstances perhaps partially explain his aversion from theory. He was a constant observer, and has described in his stories a whole world of the Russian characters of his time—cattle-drivers, railway guards, country gentlemen, waiters, innkeepers, professors, students, doctors, especially Zemstvo doctors, nurses, soldiers, merchants, Government officials, various types of the intelligentsia, women of all kinds, silly and clever, housemaids and fashionable women, professional women, peasant women, prostitutes, cab-drivers, bath-keepers, broken men, madmen, brutal men, noble men, vulgar men—there is no end to the long procession that passes on and on under grey skies—whither and to what purpose, Chehov does not choose to know. The hopelessness of the time is in his stories, the wistful longings and the willessness and powerlessness of the

ANTON CHEHOV

educated class, the superficial culture of the towns with its frequent lapses into vulgarity, and the ironical smile of a depressing yet elusive reality.

After all for Chehov reality is elusive. For all the clearness and steadiness of his gaze prosaic reality becomes as he looks upon it enigmatic and symbolical, the sober, restrained march of his prose breaks into poetry, the sceptic's emotional apprehension of life becomes mystical. Chehov's characters are often sentimental, Chehov himself never is, but he is sometimes mystical, because the very faithfulness of his record of life brings him into touch with elemental forces. At times it is as though these elemental forces themselves enter into his exposition and form the images which suggest their mysterious working. And this in natural perspective, without any blurring of the mercilessly clear outline of the story. *The Black Monk*, for instance,—an English translation of which has been published by Mr. R. E. C. Long—the story of a scholar who was haunted by a black monk, and finally died of a sharp attack of the mental and physical disease of which these apparitions were the symptom, is not merely a clever account of an interesting pathological case. The very reticence of the narrative excludes a purely physical explanation of the story which rather resembles Garshin's stories in its suggestion of strange forces at play on the fringe of personality. To take an instance of a different kind, Chehov has a short and very vivid account of a young and vigorous station-master who lives on a lonely wayside station in the Southern Steppe with a wife whom he does not love. A coquette, a relative of his wife's, appears, and a hurricane of elemental passion sweeps the station-master off his feet and devastates his life. The story is told directly, simply, without comment, without explanation, as a fact, like a storm at sea. But it awakens something of the awe that is aroused by the operation of powerful natural forces.

It is frequently asserted that Chehov is a pessimist. He

is nothing so downright as that. From a theoretical point of view he is inconclusive. He records, leaves facts to speak for themselves, and leaves questions perpetually open. But his fundamental attitude is one of reverence for the bare fact of life, for the strange, vast play of forces in which man with his feeble will and blundering reason is pitilessly involved. The keenness of his artistic interest in the sorry adventures of weak human beings on their way through life had its origin in a warm sympathy for man as man. And perhaps that wistful longing for a "brighter future" which is so often expressed by Chehov's characters is the echo of a feeling that deeply stirred his own heart.

There has been a great deal of discussion about Chehov's plays, and the question as to their real value and importance is not settled yet. These plays, the titles of which are *Ivánov*, *The Three Sisters*, *Uncle Vania*, *The Seagull*, and *The Cherry Garden*, form a distinctive type which has found a few feeble imitators, but does not seem destined to hold its ground permanently for the simple reason that it reflects a now almost forgotten mood of an epoch that is past. It is in connection with the theatre that Chehov's plays should be discussed, because it was in their production that the Artistic Theatre in Moscow first gave expression to its original conceptions of the drama and won its reputation. What Chehov's plays are as produced by the Moscow Theatre is one thing, what they are as literature is quite another. And as literature it must be admitted that they are disappointing. Chehov's characteristic lowness of tone, his careful avoidance of the unusual, his inconclusiveness, his habit of ending with an interrogation note do not harmonise with the dramatic form. The drama demands the contrast of light and shade, that heightening of tone, and that element of illusion which Chehov, in his scepticism, deliberately tried to avoid. There is a certain mild beauty in the plays as of the sighing of leaves in a lime-tree avenue in autumn, but how much more obviously is the author's talent at home in the tales. Of quite

a different character are Chehov's jolly little one act comedies like *The Wedding* and *The Bear*, which never fail to arouse roars of laughter whether the performers are peasants or artists.

Chehov spent the later years of his life at his villa in the Crimea and in travelling abroad in the hope of restoring his enfeebled health. He died at Badenweiler in the Black Forest in 1904, just before the close of the epoch which found in him its most talented interpreter. During his lifetime the critics long refused to recognise him. He was too independent. He insisted on looking at life with his own eyes and not through the spectacles of any school. And the critics declared that he had no ideals, that he was callous to suffering, that it was a matter of indifference to him whether he described a bird or an execution, that his writings had no clearly marked moral tendency. Chehov went his own way in spite of the critics. The public recognised him, and in the end it was the warmth of public recognition that compelled the critics to take his work more seriously into account.

Who is the greater, Chehov or Gorky? This question was at one time hotly debated. It has lost interest now, for the answer in Chehov's favour is simple and clear. But when Maxim Gorky's first stories appeared in 1895 and 1896 they were enthusiastically acclaimed alike by the public and the critics. He rose to fame in a day. The brilliance of his reputation obscured that of all his contemporaries. His books had a success unprecedented in Russia. Twenty-five thousand copies of his play *Townsfolk* were sold in fifteen days after its publication in 1900. Gorky was fêted everywhere, welcomed at railway stations by cheering crowds, besieged in the green rooms of theatres by mobs of ecstatic students. His success resembled that of an opera singer rather than that of a writer. After the death of the poet Nekrasov in 1877 it had been the custom to honour distinguished authors by attending their funerals *en masse* and listening to speeches

over their graves. But no writer had ever been honoured during his lifetime as was this young expert in the psychology of the tramp.

Gorky was a picturesque figure and had had an adventurous career. He was born in Nizhni Novgorod in 1869, his real name being Alexander Maksimovich Peshkov. His father had charge of a steamship office and his grandfather, with whom he lived after his father's death, was a dyer. When Gorky was seven penury overtook the old dyer, and the boy was thrust into the career of a jack-of-all-trades. He worked in a boot shop, was apprenticed to a draughtsman—from whom he ran away—was cook's boy on a Volga steamer, a baker's assistant in Kazan, and a fruit hawker in Nizhni Novgorod. In the course of his wanderings he fell into the company of tramps, vagabonds, and all kinds of odd characters who afterwards served as material for his stories. The cook he worked for on the Volga steamer was an ardent reader, and stimulated by his example, Gorky devoured chap-books of the Dick Turpin type. Later in Kazan he associated with University students and read the Russian classics. At the age of twenty he became a lawyer's clerk in Nizhni Novgorod and made many friends among the educated people of the town. But again the wandering spirit came upon him. He drifted to the south of Russia, worked as a lumper in Odessa, and as a fisherman on the Caspian, suffering great hardships but enjoying a wild, irresponsible liberty. While employed in the railway workshops in Tiflis in 1892 Gorky printed his first story in a local newspaper. Other stories of his were printed in newspapers in Kazan and Nizhni Novgorod, and in 1894 his work attracted the attention of Korolenko, who was then living in the latter town. Gorky's acquaintance with Korolenko opened his way into a broader literary world. From 1895 onwards he published his stories in the "thick journals," where their success was immediately assured. The tales of the "son of the people,"

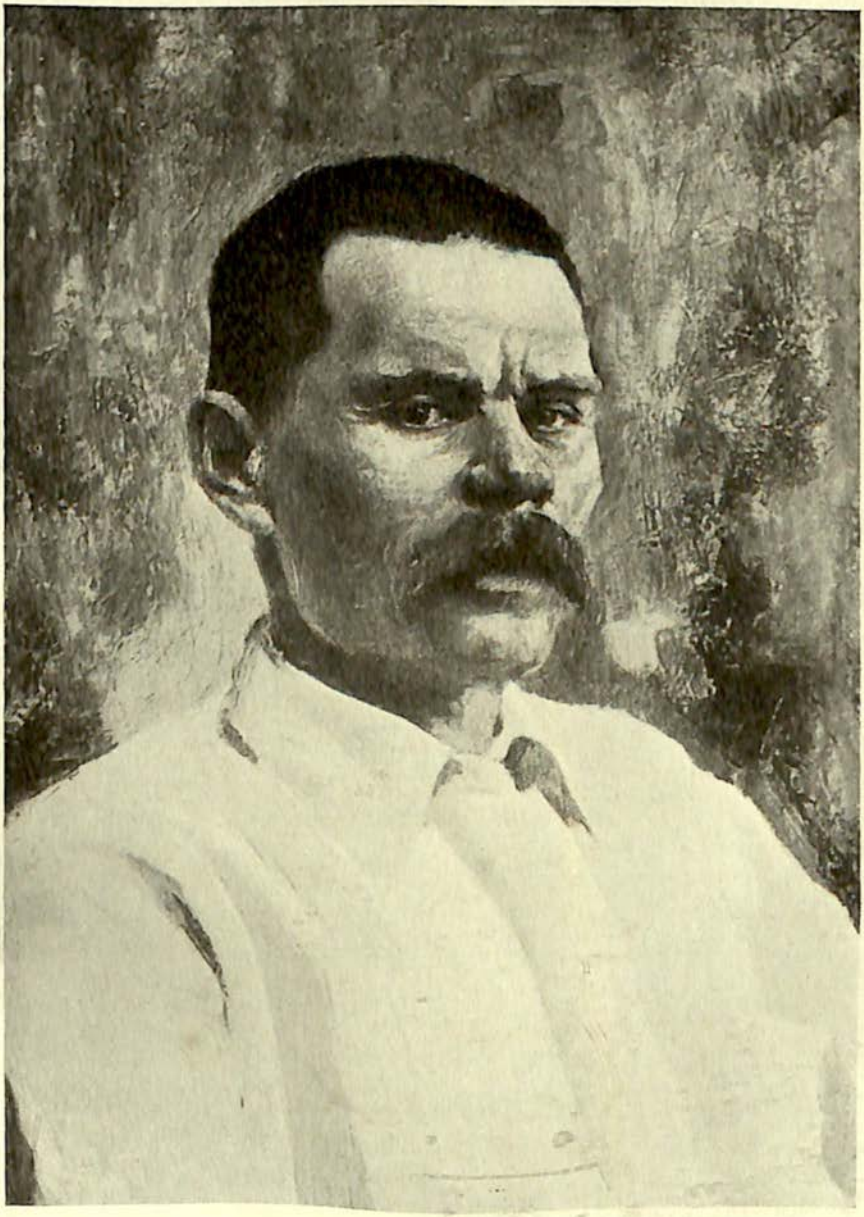
Maxim Gorky.

as Gorky was called, described aspects of life that had until then been barely touched on in Russian literature. They gave vivid pictures of the lot of roving, restless vagabonds with no occupation in particular, with no home but the night-shelter or a boat upturned on the shore, of men and women who were regarded as the outcasts of society. And this life was described with such zest and vigour, with such a wealth of colour, and such an infectious contempt for property and dull comfort and a delight in roving for its own sake that it is not surprising that the public imagination was suddenly touched and charmed. The popularity of Gorky's tales was enhanced by the fact that the author himself had risen from the depths; his reputation gained from the prevailing Socialist temper an added lustre. It was because he was a self-made man of the people that Gorky so quickly succeeded in winning the approval of that school of criticism which first and foremost sought social tendencies in literature.

Those early stories of Gorky's in which he set down his impressions of vagabond life, such as *Malva*, *Chelkash*, and *They who were once Men*, were fresh and spirited, and displayed real talent. They contained vivid descriptions of nature, the characters lived and breathed, and there was a piquant flavour of tramp philosophy. The standpoint was novel and the grasp direct. It would be interesting to speculate what might have happened to Gorky if he had been able to cultivate his artistic powers while retaining his individuality intact. But fame came too suddenly for him, a fame that was largely due to circumstances that had nothing to do with his literary merits. And the real Gorky was swept away in the current of his own clamorous reputation. Raw, uneducated, inexperienced as he was in the ways of the literary world, he was drawn into the endless disputes of the intelligentsia. He tried to see himself as the critics saw him, and to put into his later work the tendencies that critics imagined they perceived in his early stories. He identified himself with Marxian Socialists. But his association with

the intelligentsia robbed him of his native power, while, unfortunately for Gorky, those literary circles in which he moved were more interested in social theories than in art, and were unable to show him how to cultivate the talent he actually possessed. Gorky continued to write, drawing freely on his store of picturesque reminiscences. But he wrote at random with a liberal use of bright colours and with little care in selection. His style lost its nervous vigour and directness, and slipshod paraphrase frequently took the place of imagery. He made two attempts in *Foma Gordieiev* and *A Trio* to write larger tales or novels, but with only moderate success. *A Trio*—a novel full of reminiscences of the author's boyhood in Nizhni Novgorod—bored him, and he found difficulty in finishing it. For a time his talent recovered energy in the drama. Two plays, *The Townsfolk* (1907) and *In the Abyss* (1902), had a well-deserved success in Russia, and the latter, which describes life in a night-shelter, was extraordinarily successful on the German stage.

After the publication of *In the Abyss* Gorky's power steadily declined. He wrote other plays, but they attracted comparatively little attention. His personality, however, was constantly in the forefront of public interest. In 1902 he was elected member of the Section of Belles Lettres in the Academy of Science, but the police insisted on his returning the diploma on the ground that he was politically unsound. Chehov and Korolenko, indignant at the treatment of their colleague, immediately resigned their membership of the Academy. At the beginning of 1905 Gorky was arrested, together with other writers whom the police, alarmed by the labour movement, wrongly suspected of having formed a Secret Provisional Government. The arrest aroused great indignation abroad and meetings of protest were held in nearly every country in Europe. After the promulgation of the Constitution in October Gorky took a prominent part in a Social Democratic paper called the *Novaia Zhizn*. Later



MAXIM GORKY

he went abroad and, prevented by the reaction from returning to Russia, he settled on the island of Capri, near Naples, where he now resides.

Gorky continues to write, and his stories are published from time to time in Russia. One of them, *Confession*, the story of a youth who wandered over Russia with orthodox pilgrims in search of God and thought he had found what he sought in an idealised conception of the people seemed to promise a revival of Gorky's former power, but the promise has not been fulfilled.

There is something tragical in the lot of this strange and original writer. He is a man of the people, and he is caught in the meshes of the theories of the schools. A Russian through and through, who draws all his mental and spiritual nutriment from the Russian soil, he is compelled to live in exile in Western Europe whose complex civilisation oppresses him. He revolts against his position. He feels himself bound hand and foot. The elemental instincts of his nature find expression in bitter reproaches directed against the intelligentsia, in savage attacks on the bourgeoise of Western Europe. He chafes and rebels, helplessly. After attaining fame and wealth with unprecedented suddenness he endures in his distant island home the humiliation of reading articles by Russian critics on "The End of Gorky." "Gorky, the Bitter One," he signed his stories, because of the hardships of his boyhood and youth, because of the world's contemptuous indifference to his sufferings. And in middle age a deeper bitterness—the bitterness of the contemptuous rejection of a world that had toyed with him—has fallen heavily upon him.

Perhaps Gorky's work is done. And yet there is something in his personality so disquieting, such a tantalising suggestion of unused talent struggling to free itself from artificial impediments that it would be rash to deny the possibility of fresh and surprising developments in his literary career.

Gorky was "discovered" by Korolenko, and he in turn discovered in Moscow in 1897 a new writer in the person of a briefless young lawyer named Leonid Andreiev, who has since attained a popularity rivalling Gorky's own. Andreiev is one of the most puzzling of modern Russian writers, the true child of a troubled time. His work has very great and very obvious defects that again and again threaten wholly to obscure the talent that this disappointing writer undoubtedly possesses. It is unfortunate for Andreiev that his now waning popularity was due largely to the least characteristic, the inessential and the defective aspects of his work, to his tendency to rhetorical exaggeration and to a pessimism which was largely, though not wholly, a pose. Andreiev chose to make himself the apostle of unrelieved gloom, and at a time when in many the fire of life was burning low and over consciousness shadows were hanging heavily there was a disposition to take him at his word. Numbers of people regarded him as a master and lectures on the philosophy of his writings attracted large audiences. As a matter of fact this philosophy is neither complex nor profound, but it satisfied for a time the thirst for broad generalisation and summary interpretations of the meaning of life that is still a characteristic feature of the Russian public.

Andreiev.

Andreiev's early stories were well written, but there was little to distinguish them from many other short stories of the period except a certain hardness of outline and an unusual insistence on despair. In the *Life of Vasily Fiveisky* (1904), the story of the attempt of a half-insane village priest to raise a dead man, the tendencies that are most characteristic of Andreiev's later work were sharply defined. He concentrated his attention on the element of the horrible that is inseparable from crime, insanity, and moral breakdown. And it is because Andreiev isolates the horrible and uses it too obviously for the purposes of literary effect that, as a stylist, he so frequently misses his footing. From 1904

onward his style was adapted to a pose. His lines are hard and jagged. He seems of set purpose to abstain from gently flowing outline. The sunlight he describes has a metallic and not a vital gleam. His characters—in the dramas and most of the later tales—do not move ; they are moved with a deliberate, measured movement suggestive of a mechanical contrivance.

A sketch called *Red Laughter*, written in 1905, during the Manchurian struggle and describing the horrors of war, is very characteristic of Andreiev's manner. The opening words, " Madness and horror ! " are the burden of the tale, but the horror is stated insistently in so many words, the perception of it is conveyed not by tortuous plot or insidious suggestion, but by downright epithets and obvious imagery. The result was aptly described by Tolstoy : " Andreiev says 'Bo ! ' but he leaves me cold."

In some stories of the revolutionary period told with simplicity and directness, such as *The Governor* and the *Seven Men Hanged*, Andreiev displays a distinct power of grim, restrained narrative. The play, *The Life of Man*, produced by the Komisarzhevskaia Theatre in St. Petersburg and the Artistic Theatre in Moscow, aroused great interest in Russia and has been much discussed abroad. It is the bare outline of what Andreiev regards as the life of a typical man stripped of all accidentals. A prologue is declaimed by a " Someone in grey named He " ; then in successive scenes are depicted the birth of the man, his love, his worldly success, his failure and his death. Life is represented as the mere burning down of a candle to extinction, a passage from nothingness to nothingness across a lighted stage over which inscrutable and unfriendly powers are watching. Love is an illusion, success is an illusion, life has no meaning. Andreiev's hard lines, his stiff, measured movement serve well here to enhance the designed geometrical effect. The rhetoric habitual to him is not out of place in scenes deliberately abstracted on account of their supposed typical character from the

complex processes of life. The play has the impressiveness of a definite mood of generalisation presented in sharp outline. The defects are a shallowness of conception and a too facile and complacent pessimism.

Since 1905 Andreiev has been extraordinarily productive, Not a year passes without the appearance of tales or plays from his pen, and until about 1912 every new work of his was eagerly bought and read by an army of admirers. Some of the plays like *Savva* and *King Hunger*, contain echoes of the labour movement and the revolution. In *Anathema*, an attempt at philosophical tragedy with a Satan, representing the reasoning faculty in man, as the central figure, the author's lack of intellectual discipline and his weakness for rhetoric lead to a result that can only be described as a pretentious failure. *Black Masks* in which the associates of the hero, a hypothetical mediaeval duke, became transformed into a throng of black masks representing his own evil deeds, while in the final scene the black masks themselves are transformed into a pouring, engulfing darkness of absolute night, is too full of calculated and exaggerated horror to be impressive or convincing. *Anphisa*, which enjoys some success on the stage, is a sordid study of provincial manners, and *The Days of our Life* is an overdrawn picture of the life of University students. The latest of Andreiev's plays, *Ekaterina Ivanovna*, though very defective in construction, is based on an interesting idea, that of a young, beautiful, and sensitive woman losing her moral balance and sinking into depravity because her husband's unwarranted charge of infidelity "killed her soul," although the revolver shots he fired at her in his anger failed even to wound her body. One of the most characteristic of the tales published by Andreiev in recent years is *Eleazar*, describing the life of Lazarus after his resurrection. The Russian author, far from observing the reticence which Browning observed in dealing with the same subject, employs with depressing results his favourite instrument of rhetoric in order to heighten an effect of horror. Lazarus

is represented as a gruesome shape whose look, full of the dreadful vision of infinite nothingness seen in the tomb, paralyses vital energy in all upon whom it falls. But the impression intended to be conveyed is marred, is in fact almost wholly obscured, as in a great deal of Andreiev's work, by irreparable failures of tact and breaches of proportion.

Andreiev is a perplexing writer. His indulgence in cheap and vulgar effect seems at times to suggest the entire absence of an aesthetic conscience. He lacks humour, and for want of true musical sensitiveness his style drops into bathos at critical moments. Too often he sets himself tasks that are manifestly far beyond his powers. There are times when he may be said to serve as a cinematograph to Dostoievsky, that is to say, problems that caused Dostoievsky acute spiritual suffering are taken up by Andreiev for the purposes of superficial, pictorial effect. And yet Andreiev's frequent gleams of talent suggest that if he would realise his own limitations and shake off the deleterious effects of his own inflated popularity he might yet produce work of permanent value.

Contemporary Russian literature is divided into two main schools, that of the so-called " modernists " or symbolists, and that of the " realists." Andreiev, for all his toying with symbolism, must be classed together with Gorky and his associates among the realists. Another realist who deserves mention at this point is Alexander Kuprin. Kuprin is a retired officer, and his most successful stories, several of which have been translated into English, deal with army life. He is a born story-teller with a power of vivid description and virile, rapid narration that is displayed at its best in his early work. Sometimes he relapses into declamation on social questions, sometimes he is sentimental, but generally his humour and his own keen interest in the story carry him safely through. The best known of his works is *The Duel*, a longish tale depicting the cheerless life of the average officer

in a remote provincial town. *Staff Captain Rubinkov*, a story of a Japanese spy, is, as a sheer rattling story, one of the best that has been written in Russia during recent years. Unfortunately Kuprin has almost ceased to write, and when he does write he shows only faint gleams of his old power.

The Modernist Movement.

At the present moment the realists are obscured by the modernists. The modernist movement—the name like "decadent" and "symbolist," which are also frequently used, is largely a conventional designation—had its origin in a protest made by a few writers in the early 'nineties against a subordination of art to political ends. These writers, the poets Balmont and Briusov, and the critic Merezhkovsky, insisted that art was concerned first and foremost with beauty, not with morality, and that its true function was to appeal directly to the imagination and not to inculcate moral ideas. Some writers of the group, Briusov, for instance, were strongly influenced by the French symbolists, Verlaine and Mallarmé, and French influence has made itself constantly felt in the movement down to the present moment. The modernists urged the great importance of form, refused to admit that the resources of form had been exhausted in Russian literature and undertook experiments in style. Their rejection of the prevailing view that literature was a form of social service was accompanied by an emphatic assertion of individualism. Art must not be sacrificed to morality or politics, urge the modernists, neither must the individual be sacrificed to society. In the assertion of individualism the influence of Nietzsche played an important part.

The ruling school of critics, Mikhailovsky and his associates, derided the new movement, made much of its excesses and wholly ignored its real merits. A monthly called the *Sieverny Viestnik* (Northern Messenger), edited by Madame Gurevich, which acted as the organ of the modernist movement, was compelled to cease publication at the end of its second year (in 1897), "for lack of subscribers," as its

opponents complacently observed. The *Sieverny Viestnik* did good service in making its readers acquainted with literary tendencies in Western Europe and in weakening that attitude of dogmatic conservatism on literary questions which had proved such an impediment to development and had prevented the adequate recognition of the one great outstanding writer of the period, Chehov. Merezhkovsky's critical studies of classical, Western European, and Russian writers, attracted adherents to the new school, and from the beginning of the present century onward the movement has steadily developed. It could not but develop. It represented an attempt to regain intellectual touch with Europe, to reassert the intrinsic value of literature and art. It drew attention afresh to the treasures of Russian literature. It pointed out the greatness of Dostoievsky which had at the best been grudgingly admitted by the critics of the 'eighties and the 'nineties.

There was inevitable exaggeration and over-emphasis. There were oddities which were eagerly seized on by hostile critics. The modernists had no fixed body of doctrine. Several different currents of thought connected only by a common antipathy to the "realist" attitude were included in a general condemnation of "decadence." The poets, Briusov and Balmont were eagerly experimenting in new forms of poetical beauty. Merezhkovsky was interested in philosophical questions, and asserted what was considered rank heresy by the realists, that highly-educated and progressive men might sincerely believe in God and even find elements of profound truth in the Orthodox Church. Rozanov paid special attention to sexual problems and questions connected with family life and the training of children. Diagilev and Filosofov were interested mainly in questions of art. But all were agreed on one point, that literature and art had a value of their own, independently of questions as to forms of Government, the relations between capital and labour and the ownership of land.

The new movement expressed itself in various ways. A

Religious Philosophical Society, founded in St. Petersburg mainly through the instrumentality of Merezhkovsky, served as a centre for debates on the philosophy of history, on ecclesiastical politics, and on the doctrinal problems of the Orthodox Church. The society directly continued the work of the philosopher, poet, theologian, and publicist, Vladimir Soloviev, who died in the year of its foundation. The artists connected with the modernist movement founded in 1899 a monthly called *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art), which gave reproductions of pictures of the latest French and Russian schools, critical articles advocating new, and for Russia, startling views on art, and prose and verse by the best of the modernist writers. In 1903 Madame Merezhkovsky founded a literary and philosophical monthly called *Novy Put* (the New Way). The venture was not wholly successful, and towards the close of 1904, when politics assumed a new and very actual interest, greater prominence was given to the economical and political section; the monthly was renamed *Voprosy Zhizni* (Questions of Life), and in its new form subsisted until the end of 1905. In Moscow Briusov founded a much smaller review called *Viesy* (Scales), devoted solely to art, poetry, belles-lettres, and criticism. This review, which was conducted by Briusov with great ability and acumen, was for the seven years of its existence the centre of the modernist movement in Moscow. In 1906 a new St. Petersburg group was formed with the poet and critic Viacheslav Ivanov as its centre. The upheaval of ideas caused by the revolutionary movement of 1905 made an irreconcilably hostile attitude to the modernist movement largely obsolete. Balmont's poems suddenly became popular among the students, and "decadents," symbolists," and 'modernists" came to be regarded as curiously odd and tantalising but undoubtedly very interesting people. Modernist influences gained in strength, realists went over to the modernist camp, the movement lost its strangeness, many of its watchwords were generally accepted in the mood of wild eclecticism that

marked the years immediately following on the revolution; it has suffered the drawbacks of being fashionable, it has been caricatured and vulgarised. At the same time the turmoil of the revolution affected the modernists, aroused their interest in social and political conflicts, brought them into touch with mass movements and gave their teaching a social and political colouring. Briusov, Balmont, and Viacheslav Ivanov wrote poems on the war, the revolution, and the Constitution. In a poem called "The Coming Huns" Briusov welcomed in the spirit of a true decadent the onrush of wild elements destructive of culture. Viacheslav Ivanov developed theories concerning the people as the creator of artistic values and of myth-creation as an essential element in literature. Some modernists became philosophical socialists. Others became philosophical or "mystical" anarchists. Merezhkovsky, who was absent from Russia during the revolutionary period, discussed on his return the religious element in the revolution. The Religious Philosophical Society, which in 1908 resumed its sittings after a long interruption, welcomed into its midst social democratic philosophers and debated the question, partly suggested by Gorky's *Confession*, as to whether the people might in any sense be regarded as a possible object of devotion. Rozanov for a time observed with keen interest the play of popular forces in the political movement, and during the session of the First Duma he wandered about the Taurida Palace almost daily, noting all kinds of curious manifestations of human instinct. It was a time of exhilaration, when thought was free, when new ideas had an effect of inspiration, words had a magic power, hazy outlines of systems seemed complete philosophies, tradition and convention shadowy and wholly negligible illusions. Everything seemed possible. Human personality seemed illimitable and invincible. "Let us shake old Chaos, Let us tear down the firm-clamped heaven: for we can, we can, we can," cried a young poet, Sergius Gorodetsky, in Viacheslav Ivanov's rooms in a tower overlooking the Taurida Palace.

Everyone was a little mad in those days, and in the general madness modernists ceased to appear odd and abnormal. Such startling things were happening that realists lost their bearings and forgot their doctrines. The modernists treated sexual questions with freedom, and had been condemned by the realist school for doing so. When the reaction set in after the revolutionary movement a wave of excited interest in sexual questions passed over the country affecting chiefly students and schoolboys and schoolgirls, with disastrous consequences to many. The immediate occasion of this extraordinary manifestation of mass psychology is probably to be found in the nervous reaction consequent on the extreme tension of the political movement in 1905 and the beginning of 1906. It was reflected in literature, many modernists and many realists surrendered to its influence. On this point a hopeless confusion of standards and values arose, and questions of art and questions of morality were inextricably entangled. It sometimes happened that subjects considered by the modernists as matter mainly for artistic treatment were regarded by the realists as matter for didactic stories. Thus Artsybashev, who belongs to the realist school, wrote a novel, *Sanin*, in which " I desire " is preached as the sole law of conduct with the same seriousness and earnestness with which realists of an earlier date inculcated in their novels the necessity for teaching peasants the alphabet. Even among the modernists the cool air of detachment characteristic of French writers in dealing with such questions is rarely met with. It must be noted, too, that a great deal that was written during this period was the most ordinary lubricity, produced to meet the prevailing demand, and wholly unrelated to literature.

During the last few years the realists have, as has been noted, practically abandoned the field to the modernists, and, in fact, the distinction between modernists and realists has become faint and shadowy, and the very names seem like an echo of controversies that are still. The modernist

plea for form in art and for the recognition of beauty as the chief concern of art has been generally accepted as valid. All the distinguished names in Russian literature now are those of authors who have been affected more or less deeply by the modernist movement. The modernists are no longer a narrow coterie. They have greatly increased in numbers, have split up into various groups, publish their work in nearly all the monthlies and in the daily papers, develop new tendencies and cultivate new forms. For two or three years the young poets of St. Petersburg, united in a society known as the Society of Students of Russian Literature, eagerly debated questions of style, metre, and rhythm under the guidance of Viacheslav Ivanov. But now some of the younger poets have revolted against their teachers and have founded groups of their own known as " Acmeists," and " Futurists." Largely as the result of the modernist movement Russian literature is being studied with new interest. Fresh beauties are constantly being discovered in the greatest of the Russian poets, Pushkin; and Tiutchev, the Russian " poet's poet," has been raised to the seat of honour due to him.

Valuable material illustrating the history of Russian literature—especially during the first half of the nineteenth century—is being constantly brought to light, and a spirit of broad tolerance of various schools of thought is growing, a taste for literature for its own sake.

Dimitri Merezhkovsky.

The pioneer of the Modernist Movement is undoubtedly Dimitri Merezhkovsky, and he has played an important part in it during the later stages of its development. Merezhkovsky is one of the most prominent figures in Russian literature, not so much by reason of his talent as on account of his restless energy and the variety of his intellectual interests. He has written several volumes of verse strongly marked by French influence, but it is not as a poet that he will be remembered. His function is rather that of a preacher, and in his brilliant critical essays and in his historical novels he can never rest

from preaching, indeed the aim of his criticism and his novel-writing is to elucidate and to win adherents for certain broad religious conceptions of history that for years have engrossed him. Merezhkovsky is a widely-read man, with excellent literary taste, a keen faculty of critical analysis and great literary ability. In his series of novels, the Trilogy—*Julian the Apostate, Leonardo da Vinci, Peter and Alexis*—and the recently published *Alexander I*, he has undertaken the gigantic task of tracing through the Christian Era the development of a conflict between Christ and Antichrist. The energy and perseverance with which Merezhkovsky has carried his task through are not less surprising than the boldness of the enterprise. That the result is of the highest artistic or philosophical value cannot be affirmed. As pictures of strikingly different historical epochs all four novels are interesting, and there is about them an atmosphere of keen curiosity, of intellectual restlessness that compensates for many defects. An immense amount of historical material has been collected and arranged with diligence and care and sometimes with illuminating effect. To impart to all this material the tragic intensity, the vast sweep suggested by the conception on which the Trilogy is based would demand a vitality, an energy of talent that Merezhkovsky does not possess. He has far from succeeded in giving artistic form to his philosophical conception of history. Many of his characters are feebly drawn and archaeological details often burden the narrative instead of being absorbed in its flow. None the less this series of novels is a remarkable achievement, and has had no small effect in Russia in stimulating interest in religious questions, in art, and in the philosophy of history.

The main ideas that Merezhkovsky seeks to convey in his novels and critical essays and in his speeches in the Religious Philosophical Society in St. Petersburg may be briefly stated as follows. There are three epochs in the history of mankind which represent a thesis, an antithesis, and a synthesis respectively. The first is the pre-Christian epoch which

regarded God as being in the world and one with the world. This was the epoch of the Father. The second is the Christian epoch, or epoch of the Son, in which prevails the religion of God in man, God incarnate, the God-man. The third epoch, which is now beginning, is that of the Spirit, or that of the final union of Logos and Kosmos in one universal Being, God-mankind. While Christianity was in its dynamic creative period it hastened towards the final revelation, the Apocalypse, which shall unite God with the world, the spirit with the flesh, and heaven with earth. But when Christianity became petrified in dogma and in monkish asceticism, denied the phenomenal world in the name of a transcendental God, and mortified the flesh for the sake of fleshless spirit, it denied the religion of the Father and claiming to be the whole truth became falsehood. Then the first half of the truth, the thesis, that is to say, revolted against Christianity, flesh against spirit, earth against heaven, the world against God. The revolt began with the Renaissance, and is being continued at the present day in anti-Christian culture in art, science, philosophy, and in the revolutionary, social, and political tendencies of public life. But the apparent godlessness of the modern world is really a wrestling with God like that of Jacob, and the men of to-day are unconsciously wrestling with God, not with the Father but with the Son. And for that reason the godless men of to-day, the wrestlers with Christ are nearer to Christ than the Christians are. "And Christ," declares Merezhkovsky, "seeing that he has not prevailed against the world, will say to it: 'Let me go, for the day breaketh.' And the world will say to Christ: 'I will not let thee go except thou bless me.' And Christ will bless it in the morning dawn, in the revelation of the Spirit, in the third Covenant, and will give mankind a new name, the name of God-Sonhood, God-Mankind."

This is the conception that lies at the basis of all Merezhkovsky's work, that constitutes the "message" of his historical novels. In its development the influence of Nietzsche,

and more especially of Dostoievsky, is clearly marked, and the assertion that the final word establishing the synthesis between the thesis and the antithesis of history shall come from Russia recalls the teaching of the Slavophils. In his acute and penetrating critical study *Tolstoy, and Dostoievsky*, Merezhkovsky illustrates other aspects of the same idea, but the rigorous application of the theory leads to a one-sidedness which has the effect of obscuring the real greatness of Tolstoy. Merezhkovsky has published a number of critical studies on Pushkin, Gogol, and other Russian and European writers, and in essays in the monthlies and in the daily press, most of which have been published in volume form, has applied his religious and philosophical ideas to various phases of Russian public life. It cannot be said that Merezhkovsky has founded a school and there are few who accept his theories in their totality. His style, in spite of a certain nervous vibration that pervades it, lacks warmth and vividness. It arouses intellectual curiosity rather than aesthetic or religious emotion. But Merezhkovsky's services in stimulating the movement of ideas in contemporary Russia are very great. He is a tireless disturber of intellectual peace.

Madame Merezhkovsky, who writes verse and fiction under her maiden name, Zenaida Hippius, and literary criticism under the pseudonym of Anton Krainy, has been her husband's chief assistant in the dissemination of his ideas. She has published several volumes of short stories which are well written but are devoted to the illustration of ideas rather than to the development of emotional images. Madame Hippius' best work is to be found, however, in her capricious, fanciful verse, which hovers in dim backgrounds of instinct, in borderlands of religious emotion, is blown hither and thither by the gusts of other people's opinions, is half sincere and again in earnest, toys with evil and yields to an impulse to worship, is sentimental and half-human, takes on a serious pose and fades away in mocking, elfish laughter. "It is the abstract," once wrote Madame Hippius, "that is dear to

me, with the abstract I build up life. . . . I love everything solitary and unrevealed. I am the slave of my strange, mysterious words. And because of the speech that alone is speech I do not know the words of this world." In another poem written in 1906 she speaks of swinging in a net under the branches "equally far from heaven and earth." Both pleasure and pain are a weariness, earth gives bitterness, heaven only mortifies; below no one believes, above no one understands, and so, "I am in the net, neither here nor there. Live, O men and women! Play, O children! Swinging, I say 'No!' to all that exists. Only one thing I fear; swinging in the net, how shall I meet the warm, earthly dawn?" Madame Hippius' art is that of a twilight world between sense and spirit where beauty has a spectral quality and passion is an echo.

A Poetical Revival. Konstantin Balmont.

The modernist movement expressed itself most distinctly as a poetical revival, and the leaders in this revival were Balmont and Briusov, the former half-consciously, the latter of deliberate purpose. Konstantin Balmont is a poet for the sheer love of the music of poetry. In an autobiographical note he writes that he grew up among trees, flowers, and butterflies, that in his childhood poetry gave him physical delight, and that he is quietly convinced that no one in Russia before him knew how to write melodious verse. In one of his poems he boasts that all the poets that came before him were but his forerunners, and that he first discovered the music of the Russian tongue. The boast is one of the buoyant exaggerations habitual to Balmont, but it is certainly true that no Russian poet has so frankly revelled as he has in the mere sound of Russian words, in their lilt, their melody, their resonance, their harmonies. He has an extraordinary gift of improvisation, and a faculty of most musically expressing fleeting, ethereal emotions. Music and emotion blend in his verse and wander down aimless ways of delightful discovery. There is a

perpetual boyishness about Balmont, a cheerful recklessness, a *naïveté* that with the years tends to become a mannerism. There is no profound philosophy in his poetry. It is the everyday experience of a restless, and delightfully irresponsible egoist transformed into music. When Balmont tries to be philosophical, when he burdens his poetry with occult or mythological subjects his music fails him. "I came into the world," he says of himself simply, "to see the sun and blue horizons, I came to see the sun and mountain heights, the sea and the rich colours of the vale. I have embraced the worlds in one single glance, I am a sovereign, I have conquered cold oblivion in fashioning my dream. Every moment I am full of revelation—I am ever singing. It was suffering that called forth my dream, but love, too, is mine. Who is my fellow in power of song? Not one, not one. I came into this world to see the sun, and if daylight fail I will sing, I will sing of the sun in my mortal hour."

During the revolutionary period Balmont wrote political verse. He has consequently been compelled since 1906 to live abroad, chiefly in Paris, and exile has had a paralysing effect upon a talent of rare spontaniety. Balmont has translated into Russian the works of many foreign poets, including Calderon and Shelley. He knows foreign languages well, but he is too subjective to be a good translator, and his version of the English poet is much more suggestive of Balmont than Shelley. The English poet whom Balmont most resembles in quality though not in range of talent, is Swinburne.

Valery Briusov.

Valery Briusov, the most distinguished of living Russian poets, is as self-conscious and severe as Balmont is impetuous and exuberant. Balmont made his poetical discoveries by chance, as it were, by virtue of an extraordinary inborn sensitiveness to verbal music. Briusov has developed his poetical talent by a course of stern self-discipline. He has chosen art as his vocation, and devoted himself to it with the singleness of aim

that his Moscow merchant ancestors displayed in building up their business. His manner is one of cold dignity and reserve. He resents the frivolous display of emotion, and will not display his own until by careful search and mature reflection he has discovered for it the absolutely fitting form. To questions of form he devotes minute study, scrupulously weighs words and sounds in the balance, tests variations of rhythm and metre. Briusov has a passion for verse, not as music merely, but as poetry in the very broadest sense. He is a man of wide culture, and his verse is now simply an elegant accomplishment, a neat and skilful way of saying trifles, and now the concentrated expression of deep passion. He is a sceptic, an enemy of facile enthusiasms and vague generalisations, of religions that are to be had for the thinking of them. He is especially attracted by the cold, rhetorical Roman civilisation of the period of decline, with its distaste for the crude illusions of the crowd. His favourite theme is passion, passion untinged by religious mysticism, passion on which satiety follows, which has in it the bitter sweetness of death, and is akin to all the elemental destructive forces of the world. Briusov writes of Antony who, "when Tribunes fought for the people and Emperors for power, raised one altar—the altar of passion," and prays that such a lot may be his, that he, too, may, in the hour of decisive conflict when the battle is not yet finished, forsake all and follow the Egyptian keel. In the revolutionary year he welcomes the forces of destruction with all the eagerness of the son of an outworn and decadent culture. "Where are ye, O ye coming Huns, who are hanging like a cloud over the world. I hear your leaden tramp on Pamirs yet hidden from our eyes. Fall upon us from your dark camps, a drunken horde, and quicken our decrepit body with a wave of flaming blood." He bids them raze palaces and thrones, burn books in bonfires and defile temples. "And we, the wise men and poets, the guardians of mystery and faith, shall bear away our lighted candles into catacombs,

deserts and caves. . . . It may be that everything will perish that was known to us alone, but you who destroy me I meet with a hymn of welcome."

In another poem, *The Pale Horse*, Briusov gives a singularly vivid picture of the traffic in a city street, of the sudden vision of a rider on a Pale Horse looming up in the sky, of the horror of destruction that fell upon the crowd, and of the passing of the vision and the renewal of the busy hum of the street, leaving only a prostitute and a madman vaguely stretching out their hands to where the vision had been. In this poem Briusov displays great skill in the employment, in a context of high poetical tension, of such prosaic words as "newsboy," and "shop-sign," and such modern and foreign words as "cab," "omnibus," and "automobile."

Briusov is a prose writer of distinction as well as a poet. His *Republic of the Southern Cross* is a fantastic romance, cold and artificial. *The Fiery Angel* is a romance dealing with mediaeval witchcraft, full of curious occult learning. The *Altar of Victory*, which appeared in the *Russkaia Mysl* in 1912, is a story of that epoch in Roman history—the fourth century A.D.—which chiefly attracts the author's sympathy. These works are marked by coldness, a lack of humour and a defective sense of character, and the literary skill and learning displayed in them do not avail to raise them above the level of curious experiments. As a critic Briusov is sober, penetrating, and exact, and his critical essays, most of which were published in the review *Viesy* (Scales), so ably edited by him during the years between 1903 and 1908, have been of great educative value. Briusov's sympathies lean strongly to French literature and art, and by means of his review he maintained a direct connection between the French and Russian literary circles. A complete edition of his works in twenty-five volumes is now in course of publication.

Viacheslav Ivanov is a poet who has occupied in St. Petersburg a position similar to that occupied by Briusov in Moscow

as leader of the modernist movement. His home was for several years a centre of literary debate, the place where the younger poets assembled to read their poems, to discuss literary and philosophical theory, and simply to breathe an atmosphere charged with new emotions and new ideas. Viacheslav Ivanov is a classical scholar, studied for a time under Mommsen, and wrote a dissertation called *De Societatibus vectigalium publicorum populi Romani*. Nietzsches' ideas influenced him strongly, and he was attracted by the theories advanced by Merezhkovsky. His earliest literary and philosophical essays and a study called *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God* were published in Merezhkovsky's review *Novy Put* (The New Way), and to the young poets who gathered around him in 1906 he declared that it was his desire to continue Merezhkovsky's work. Ivanov's wide learning, his subtle mind, his knowledge of literary form, his eagerness to discover and encourage talent, his curious power of giving a semblance of authority and finality to all sorts of hazy religious and philosophical ideas that were afloat in the atmosphere of the time or were constantly being evolved by his fertile brain—all these qualities combined with his great literary talent speedily secured for him the position of a master. His manner was, indeed, that of the priest of a new cult. From 1906 till 1912 he was the leader of a new poetical school. His poetry is burdened with neologisms and learned allusions, and is full of classical imagery and subtle parallels between Russian and classical mythology. The strength of Viacheslav Ivanov's talent is shown in the fact that it has wrought out of this complex and difficult material a music that is new in Russian poetry. The sources of inspiration are manifold and often recondite and the personality revealed in the poems is extraordinarily many-sided. Ivanov's poetry will never be popular, but it is real and profound poetry, rich, tense, and adventurous in ideas and form. It is like a garden of tropical flowers transplanted by occult influences to Russian soil and

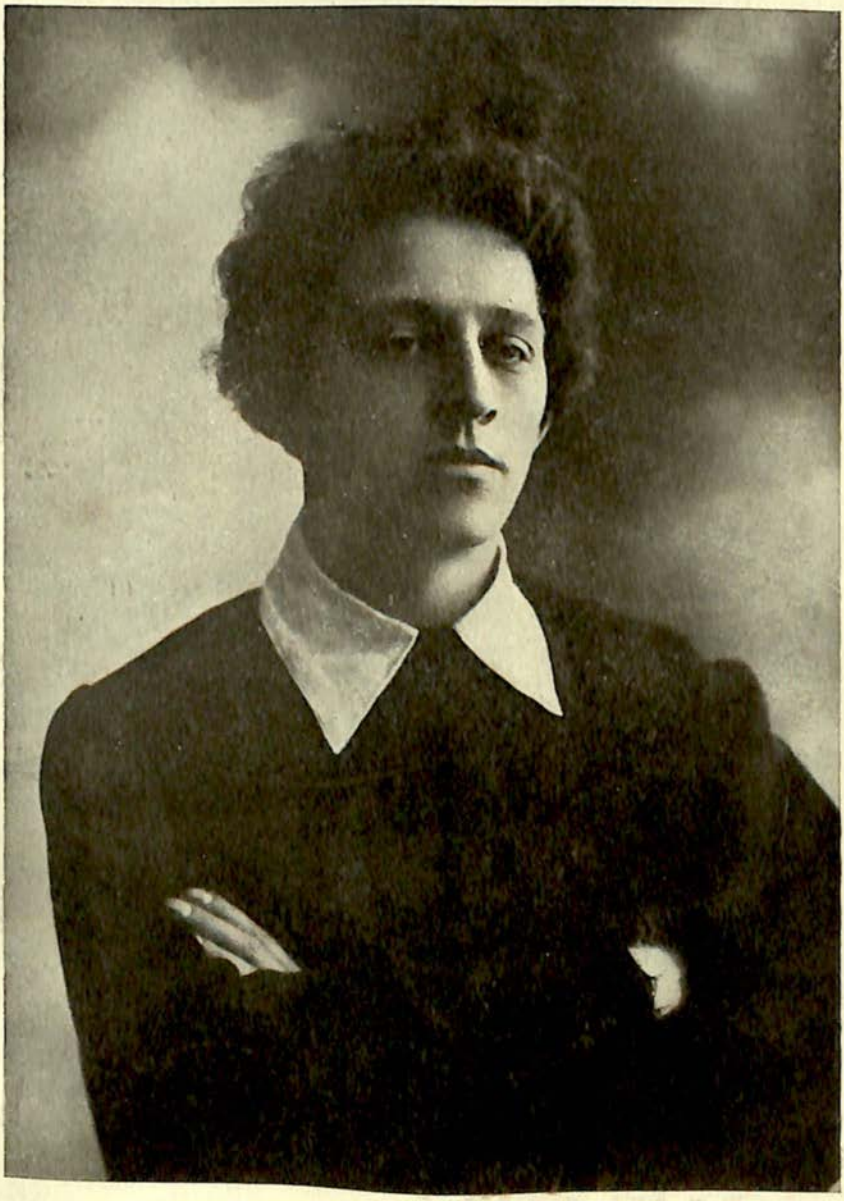
Viacheslav Ivanov.

mingling their heavy scent with the winds that sigh endlessly over the great plain.

It is too early to discuss the character of Ivanov's influence on the younger poets. In certain ways it can be seen to have been harmful. It encouraged in some a superficial modernism, coldly curious experimenting with the instinctive and the sub-conscious, a pursuit of novelty in thought and conduct for mere novelty's sake, an irresponsible toying with religious emotion. But it is to Ivanov's teaching and example that the younger St. Petersburg poets owe a deepened conception of poetry as an art demanding the concentration of their finest energies.

Alexander Blok.

Of the younger lyric poets Alexander Blok has a greater power of simple and direct appeal than any Russian poet now living, and this power he exercises by means of a shy reticence, by means of hints and half-tones, by suggestive images lightly drawn, and by music revealing such a passion for remote beauty, such a fine sensitiveness to sorrowful and exquisite meanings that it charms even the dusty prose of streets and restaurants into dignity and nobility. Neither Briusov nor Ivanov can touch the heart as Blok does. His verse is often obscure. He does not relate, he only suggests, the vibrations of his music touch feelings that are beyond the reach of words. He records with intense sincerity the life of a broken spirit that finds in expression a momentary solution of the problem of its high sorrow. It is impossible, and it would be useless if it were possible; to describe the matter of Blok's poems—they are so extraordinarily subjective. To say that there is a strongly mystical element in his poetry, to say that he writes of love or nature or wine, that he feels the poetry of the town, that in his later verse he gives expression to a deep and pure national feeling, and that in all his work there is a tragical note, is to say nothing about the real Blok who is to be known only through the music of his own verse. Blok is still in the early thirties. He has published



ALEXANDER BLOK

several volumes of verse under the titles of *Poems on the Fair Lady, Unlooked-for Joy, The Snowy Mask, The Earth in Snow, Songs of the Night,* and a volume of lyrical dramas, including *Pulcinello, The King in the Public Square,* and *The Strange Woman.* He produces constantly, his talent is steadily maturing, and the years before him are full of happy promise.

Poetry is being so assiduously cultivated in Russia now that a whole galaxy of minor poets has arisen, some of whom have broken away from the authority of their modernist elders and have tried to form schools on their own account, but have not yet succeeded in producing anything strikingly new.

Feodor Sologub.

There is one striking and enigmatical figure in contemporary Russian literature who is equally distinguished as a poet and as a writer of prose, fiction, and drama. Feodor Sologub is the pseudonym of Feodor Kuzmich Teternikov, formerly a provincial school-inspector, and now resident in St. Petersburg. His father, who was a peasant and a shoemaker, died in St. Petersburg when Sologub was a child. His mother secured a position as housekeeper, and her two children, Feodor and Olga, played together happily enough in the kitchen. The master of the house was a kindly man and gave Feodor enough education to enable him to become a primary school-teacher. For several years Sologub taught in Vychegda, a small town in the northern government of Vologda, and in the course of time became a school inspector. It is one of the paradoxes of modern Russian literature that a man with such limited opportunities should have become a writer of such force, originality, and polish as Sologub has, in his best work, shown himself to possess. His early work was published in the 'nineties in the review *Sieverny Viestnik,* but he did not become widely known and recognised until after 1905. Sologub is a remarkable stylist, attaining without apparent effort a flexibility and a verbal harmony that give

distinction to almost everything he writes. His lyrics are marked by a pessimism hardly relieved by a ray of any hope except the chilly hope of death. Sometimes he mourns plaintively over the darkness of the world and the futility of life. Sometimes he accepts the world, but it is a world of sin in which he takes evil as his guide and wanders at the bidding of vice down dark labyrinths. " A sad, pale shadow," he writes in pensive lines, " a narrow, winding way, a dreary and gloomy day—O heart forget about freedom! Thou art pale and sad with longing, thy breast breathes wearily, dreams are shy and hardly come—O heart forget about happiness."

Again he cries contemptuously, " We are imprisoned beasts and howl as best we can. The doors are tightly shut and we dare not open them. If our heart is true to tradition we bark, comforting ourselves with our barking. That the cages are filthy and foully smell we have long since forgotten, if ever we knew it. To repetition the heart is accustomed, we howl drearily and monotonously. Everything in the cages is humdrum and ordinary, and of freedom we have long since ceased to dream." Sologub writes of himself: " I am the God of a mysterious world, all the world is in my dreams alone." Or again, he tells of how when he suffered shipwreck he called to his " Father, the devil," who saved him in answer to his cry, " Suffer not my maddened soul to perish before the time, I shall give up to the power of dark vice the rest of my black days." In other poems by the magic of his verse he gives a strange fascination to death. And yet in the deserts of Sologub's pessimism one may sometimes meet with blue flowerlets of simple beauty watered by the morning dew of tenderness. Sologub is one of the most tantalising of poets. He eludes all categories, mocks at his own words, peers ironically at the reader and leaves him doubting whether the poet is really at heart a pessimist, whether he really delights in the savour of sin, whether he believes in God or the Devil, whether he may not in the long run be simply

indifferent and the whole of his writings merely elegant persiflage.

But he is not indifferent. He is suffering from some profound sickness of the spirit which gives him no rest. And to this sickness he has given subtle expression in a powerful novel called *Melky Bies* (The Imp). This novel describes a high-school master in a provincial town, Peredonov, a man devoid of every high and noble quality, without a single intellectual interest, vulgar, contemptible, vicious, stupid, and cowardly. The wretched man is gradually entangled in the net of his own errors and vices, and of the pettiness and vulgarity of the people of the town he lives in, and he perishes blunderingly, stupidly, blindly, knowing not why. The evil in the man is symbolised by a shadowy little spirit, an imp called the *nedotykomka*, the Impalpable One, which appears from time to time perhaps as an hallucination of Peredonov's, perhaps as a mere suggestion, a doubt, a fear, perhaps as something half real. "It lives to terrify and destroy him. Magic, multiform, it follows him, mocks him, deludes him—now rolling on the floor, now pretending to be a rag, a ribbon, a twig, a flea, a cloud, a little dog, a pillar of dust in the street, and everywhere creeps and runs after Peredonov. It has worn him out, exhausted him by its rippling dance." But the presence of this symbolic element only serves to heighten the realistic vividness of the story. The life of a typical Russian town is described with a bitter minuteness, with an almost morbid clarity of vision. The life of the wretched Peredonov becomes in Sologub's presentation a deep tragedy. In none of his works does the author's artistic power reach such a pitch of intensity as in *The Imp*.

The Imp was Sologub's second novel. His first, *Evil Dreams*, showed great mastery of style, and the style was brought to great perfection in several volumes of short stories published between 1905 and 1908. These stories deal to a large extent with the charm of childhood and the fascination

of death. Many of them are very beautiful, but in nearly all is felt that savour of evil which is so characteristic of Sologub. During the last few years a rapid decline, not to say a collapse of this great talent has been noticeable, and his later works are full of repellent elements no longer subdued by the power of artistic impulse.

Sologub is well beyond middle age. There is a much younger writer of prose, Aleksei Remizov, whose originality of talent, mastery of form, and deep under-

Aleksei Remizov.

standing of the Russian popular mind give him a high place altogether apart from other writers of talent. Remizov comes of a Moscow merchant family, was educated in Moscow, has had a hard battle with life, lived in the east and south of Russia, was exiled to Vologda for some political affair with which he was not directly concerned, and has since 1905 lived in St. Petersburg, often on the brink of extreme poverty. With amazing persistence this quaint, retiring, unworldly man has pursued his literary way. His gift is unique, and he refused to modify its expression at the bidding of any demand of convenience or expediency. He met with failure after failure. A few discerning fellow-craftsmen recognised his talent, but to most the work he succeeded in getting published seemed bizarre and grotesque. Many even of the modernists refused to acknowledge him. But he steadily fought his way, wrote as he felt compelled to write, in spite of poverty and illness, and gradually won recognition by the sheer force of his talent and the intensity of his purpose. His style is wholly his own, slow-moving, remote from the facile fluency of journalistic Russian, full of the dignity of the popular speech and of the spirit of those curious byways of Russian life where tradition still lives on and where modern civilisation has not done its blurring and levelling work. Remizov has a sly humour, a taste for the grotesque and a tendency to mystification that add greatly to the charm of his work, though it was these very qualities that a few years ago

ALEKSEI REMIZOV

militated against his popularity. And then there is compassion in him, a sense of the tragic movement of life and of far ways of tear-stained deliverance. No living writer feels the Russian people as he does, its clinging to the earth, its grossness, its sensuality, its sense of sin, together with its spiritual ardour, its religious beliefs, its quaint customs, its rich language, and its incessant trouble and yearning and high dream of victory. It is not an idealised people that he sees, doing the things that a sociological theory declares it must be doing, but a very real people that can be beast-like and yet can see heavenly visions. Remizov has published eight volumes of prose. His novels, *The Pond* and *The Clock*, contain very realistic descriptions of the life of the petty tradesman class. His later tales, *The Irrepressible Fellow*, *The Sisters of the Cross*, and *The Fifth Plague*, display a striking power of depicting the grotesque, the repulsive and the merely commonplace features of life in the provincial towns and in the capitals as elements in a purifying tragedy the significance of which the Russian people instinctively understands. The tales are not merely narratives. They have the concentrated art of poems in prose. Remizov has written a number of prose-poems of another character—adaptations of old-Russian apocryphal tales, the fantastically beautiful variations on Biblical themes with which Byzantines, Greeks, Southern Slavs, and the Russians of the Kiev and Moscow periods satisfied their literary needs. His dramas, *The Play of the Devils*, and *Judas, Prince of Iscariot*, are also based on these legends. Besides a number of short stories on contemporary themes into which the element of the grotesque largely enters Remizov has written charming fairy tales. His work shows traces of the influence of Dostoievsky and Gogol, and certain features are reminiscent of Leskov. But these are the influences of kindred spirits and do not detract from the striking originality which makes Remizov the most interesting of contemporary Russian writers of fiction.

Literary criticism is in a transition stage in Russia at the present moment, and there are no critics who are recognised by all the schools. Reviews are nearly always signed, even in the daily papers, which devote a considerable amount of space to what is called "bibliography," the names of critics are generally known, and the opinions of prominent critics carry great weight. Professor Ovsianniko-Kulikovsky, formerly professor in Kharkov, now editor of the literary section of the *Viestnik Yevropy*, may be mentioned as a typical representative of the old school of criticism, and Briusov, Ivanov, and Andrei Biely of the new. Andrei Biely, a versatile young writer, author of two volumes of poems and a novel called *The Silver Dove*, describing the experiences of an "intelligent" amongst members of a fanatical sect, has devoted a great deal of attention to metrical analysis, and by reducing to mathematical formulae the metrical systems of Pushkin and other great Russian poets, has obtained curious and interesting results.

Literary Criticism.

During the last few years the number of readers has greatly increased in Russia. The relaxation of the stringency of the censorship in 1905 led to an increased literary output, and the political excitement of the period greatly stimulated the demand for printed matter. At first it was newspapers and endless pamphlets on political and social questions that were most eagerly read and widely circulated, but after the first keen interest in politics had died down in the disappointment of the period following on the dissolution of the First Duma a demand arose amongst all those thousands who had suddenly formed a habit of reading for literature of another kind. And the production of literature that is not literature, but simply reading matter, entertaining or lightly instructive, as the case may be, received a powerful impetus. There was a rage for cheap detective stories, adaptations of Sherlock Holmes and of his American imitators. The rage passed, but the habit of reading remained among a host of people

Increased Demand for Books.

who up to that time had been indifferent to the printed page, amongst shop-assistants and sempstresses, and all sorts of minor Government employees, and amongst tradesmen's families in provincial towns. Sometimes the new recruits to the army of readers were well guided and acquired a taste for books that led out into a wider world of thought and interest. Many of the working men, for instance, who had often borne the brunt of the bitter experiences of the time of stress, were keen in their search for knowledge, found their way to the best in Russian literature, and demanded of their teachers in the workmen's clubs instruction in science: at one time the workmen in St. Petersburg took an extraordinary interest in astronomy.

But for the most part the taste of the new readers is very indefinite, and indeed there has been of late such a conflict and confusion of literary standards that the average reader prefers to turn aside from the masters and rely simply on his own instincts and preferences. This leads to a general lowering of standards and to the spread of a literature of a very meretricious quality. That is to say, between educated readers of taste and the masses of the people who read cheap books there is now growing up an average class of readers like that broad class in Western countries which is unexacting in matters of art, objects to mental strain in reading and merely wishes to be amused. This is one of the symptoms of the spread of European influences. But at the same time this broader public provides a promising field for experiments in popularisation, and such experiments of the kind as have been made have proved remarkably successful. There is a restlessness in the Russian mind that will not suffer soporifics for long and easily wearies of glittering imitations. Popular historical works—for instance, the volumes of well illustrated, popular essays by distinguished professors on the Emancipation of the Peasantry and on the Napoleonic invasion published by the Moscow house of Sytin—have a very wide circulation. The influence of a growing aesthetic

demand is seen in the great improvement in the get-up of the books now published. A few years ago nearly all books, poetry, and fiction, as well as science, made their appearance before the world in monotonously grey or greenish covers on which the title was printed in the plainest lettering. Korolenko's, Gorky's, and Andreiev's early volumes all came out in this sober style. Paper covers are still the rule—only dictionaries and encyclopaedias come on to the market bound in leather or cloth—but there is a great variety in the lettering, the colouring, and the adornment of the exterior. There are inevitable failures of taste, and the increasing numbers of translations of French novels with pictures on the covers in glaring red, green, or yellow, do not add to the beauty of the booksellers' windows.

The number of translated books on the market is probably greater in Russia than in any large European country. The reason lies not only in the eager curiosity of Russians in regard to Western Europe which expresses itself in the annual summer migration to Switzerland, France, and Italy. Translation was until recently the easiest and simplest form of book-production because the Government had not signed the Berne Convention and the copyright of foreign authors did not extend to Russia. The knowledge of foreign languages is widespread, an army of translators was available, and all the novelties of the European book-market were hastily turned into Russian. It is not surprising that, given a multitude of ignorant or unscrupulous translators and hack publishers the results were often melancholy. A Moscow firm kept a large staff of translators—mostly women—at almost a sweating wage, whose duty it was to supply monthly eighty printed pages of translated matter. A Russian student in Berlin who provided his publisher in St. Petersburg with translations of Gerhard Hauptmann's plays used to farm out the work. When a new play of Hauptmann's appeared he tore the book into sections and distributed the pages among indigent students who translated for a song.

The collective result was sent to St. Petersburg by the entrepreneur, who actually found the business profitable. But the standard of translation is steadily rising, and now that an Authors' Copyright Bill has been passed by Parliament and the Russian Government is signing Literary Conventions with the chief European countries abuses should be far less frequent than they have been in the past. One result of the abundance of translations is that the average educated Russian has a much wider acquaintance with modern European literature in general than the average Frenchman or Englishman. It says much for the good taste of the Russian reading public that a cheap "Universal Library" started a few years ago on the model of such enterprises as Reclaim's Universal-bibliotek, in Germany, and consisting almost entirely of translations of the best current European fiction has been strikingly successful. Its little yellow paper-covered twopenny or threepenny volumes are to be seen in every railway train.

That Russia under moderately favourable conditions cannot fail to present a very extensive book-market a glance at the map will show. Between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and Tiflis and Vladivostock are hundreds of thousands of insatiable readers, and with the gradual spread of education the number is steadily growing. In almost every town, even the smallest, there is a bookshop of some kind, and books sell. There are nations that buy books and there are nations whose citizens borrow, either from public libraries or from those few neighbours who do buy. The Russians buy and borrow too. Books are cheap. The average novel or volume of travel or history costs half-a-crown or less. Translations of costly foreign works frequently sell in Russia for half the price of the original. Naturally this cheapness of price is largely accounted for by the cheapness of the get-up of books, and, with an improvement in their outward appearance it may be expected that their price will rise. In fact it is already rising, and books at two and three roubles, (four and

six shillings), are now very much more common than they used to be.

Russian children begin to read early and read a great deal, but it is remarkable that comparatively little original literature for children is produced. Children's books are well-printed and well-illustrated, but most of them are translations from foreign, chiefly English authors. Fenimore Cooper, Mayne Reid, and Seton Thompson are as popular among Russian boys and girls as they are in England and America. Many Russian children early become acquainted with the masterpieces of their own literature, with the poems of Pushkin, Lermontov and Nekrasov, with Turgeniev's novels and with the earlier tales of Tolstoy. On such works as these they develop a literary taste which is too often blunted by the dull mechanical method of teaching literature in the secondary schools.

It is frequently complained that Russian literature is declining, that the national gift which, as manifested in the works of Tolstoy, Turgeniev, and Dostoievsky aroused the wonder of Europe, has been lost amid the turmoil of recent years. A golden age is past, it is said. Twilight has fallen. The giants have gone to their rest, taking the secret of their power with them. And the present generation, burdened with a sense of its own weakness, is unable to lift its hands to create boldly and greatly. Russian literature, it is urged, has abandoned the pursuit of truth for the pursuit of recondite sensation and form. But this is not a fair presentment of the case. It is true that there are no giants now. But the general level of literature is much higher than it was. The care for form does not constitute a breach with the best traditions of Russian letters. It was in the poetry of Pushkin and Lermontov that modern Russian literature came to its full strength at the beginning of the last century, and it was the mastery of form gained in poetic creation that made possible the succeeding remarkable development of prose fiction. The recent poetical revival is again in its turn

leading to new developments in prose. The resources of the language are being explored with new zest, and with happy results. New words and new combinations of words are being discovered, new harmonies and a new power of suggestion.

But the question of form has wider implications. Tolstoy once said to me at the beginning of 1905 :—

" The writers of the present day write well. Every young lady knows how to write better than Turgeniev or I. But the trouble is that they have nothing to say."

Tolstoy did not favour the modern school. Of the younger writers Kuprin was the only one whom he praised unreservedly. He disliked everything that was suggestive of artificiality in style, everything that made an author unintelligible to the masses of the people. With his view that art was a means of deepening fellowship among men by means of an infectious quality in style he could not approve of those forms of art that failed to make a direct and simple appeal to the average man. He was a passionate lover of music, but he found Wagner ridiculous. The whole modernist movement seemed to him symptomatic of perverted taste. His long wrestling with purely ethical questions, his proud rejection of his own art, his yearning for simplicity as for a cooling, healing draught, all militated against his appreciation of modern Russian art with its impatience of the unadorned.

But the Russian writers of to-day are not so remote from Tolstoy as they seem. They share his restlessness, they, too, are engaged in that great spiritual adventure on which he and Dostoievsky set out. They are more closely akin to Dostoievsky it is true than to Tolstoy. They are broadening out the tracks that Dostoievsky blazed, they are developing his hints and suggestions ; they have learned from him to press on into the dark recesses of the human soul, with a heavy heart, but with a constant energy of discovery, drawn on by a tantalising presentiment of light within the darkness. In their journey of psychological discovery they have in new

forms, in a developed style, an indispensable instrument. New rhythms and harmonies awaken hitherto unsuspected vibrations, refine perception, and awaken a more complex sensation of reality. The modernists have that delight in form for its own sake, without which art is not art. With some this assumes a voluptuous quality which is heightened by the sensation that they are holding an aesthetic banquet in time of plague, that they are quaffing from death's heads the wine of their exaltation. The very sadness, the intense morbid depression that pervades modern Russian literature are strangely attuned to an invincible sense of beauty. All the effort of the moderns is simply part of that unresting roaming of the Russian over the wide expanses of the soul from hot sunlit plains and valleys by a Southern Sea to misty tundras on the confines of the night. There are elements of falsity in the literary work of the last few years. There is frequently an aping of foreign models, an eager desire to be up to date, to say in Russian the very last word that has been said in French, a readiness to be deluded by mere phrases, a frequent lack of taste in the handling of delicate subjects. But in its main tendency this work is wholly Russian. And to Tolstoy it is akin in one fundamental quality, in a certain, almost childlike regardlessness of consequences. Tolstoy in his passion for morality denied and despised his own splendid achievements in art. "Let art and the whole tremendous fabric of modern civilisation perish," he seemed to be crying, "only let the soul of man find salvation and peace." The writers of recent years have done almost the reverse. It is not that in the pursuit of aesthetics they have trampled on ethics. They are often enough impelled by ethical and religious unrest. But in their impetuous search they broke down ethical barriers, wandered in forbidden fields, ignored all standards without regard for possible social consequences. That the effect of much of recent literature on many weaker natures has been disastrous, that characters have been broken, lives ruined,

that the wandering of literature in a country without bounds has oppressed many with a sense of the endless nothingness of life, that too great a knowledge of evil may kill the desire to live—such considerations as these do not deter Russian writers in their pursuit. The tremendous human waste to which their work may probably lead does not stay their hand. "What of the waste and ruin," they would probably say, "if by collective strain and effort, if by the suffering of all, the end at last be reached?" There is something fateful in this indifference to immediate consequences. The Russian conquest of the great plain involved through the centuries a terrible sacrifice of human life, was effected at the cost of a brutal disregard of the fate of millions. Russian literature in its great effort to conquer a boundless spiritual plain is again and again impelled by the same reckless impulse. It sacrifices vital instincts and goodness itself for the sake of some remote glimmering of the best of all, a hint of which may sometimes be caught in the wailing of "Lord have mercy upon us," in some village church. For Russia is most terribly Christian in a sense of which perhaps only the East has the secret. Such a sense of sin, such a sense of the power of evil as the Russians have is possessed by no other people in the modern world. "We writers and readers have one thing in common," declares Andrei Biely; "we are all in the hungry, barren Russian plains where the evil one has been leading us from of old." While others say that from Russia shall come the final word of deliverance.

Over the later years of Russian literature, over nearly all the period of development here described, Tolstoy stood guard in his home in Yasnaya Polyana. Throughout the 'eighties, the period of paralysing reaction, his doctrine of non-resistance to evil permeated Russian society and attracted many sympathisers. Tolstoy preached, expounded his religious teachings in writings that passed in manuscript from hand to hand, and led a simple life. Towards the end of the 'eighties a fresh spirit of resistance arose and Tolstoy's direct influence

diminished. He wrote his charming popular tales, felt again and again the artistic impulse, but checked it sternly or else yielded to it with a bad conscience. It is, perhaps, not altogether fanciful to see a connection between the rising energy, the new social movement of the 'nineties and the return of Tolstoy's artistic power which was manifested in the publication of his novel *Resurrection* in 1899. Tolstoy was very sensitive to the spirit of the times. But he stood apart from the popular movement, and although younger literary men frequently came to him to express their veneration or to ask his advice he held aloof from literary circles, and literary disputes. For a time he looked with interest and favour on the *Sieverny Viestnik*, the first organ of the modernists, and printed in it his *Master and Man*. But his eyes were constantly set on things with which the literature of the day had little concern. And the writers in the capital in their turn ceased to pay attention to Tolstoy. His works were widely read, the country was proud of him, especially proud of the interest his personality aroused abroad. But he was a great figure in the background, exerting a subtle moral influence the character and extent of which it was very difficult to gauge during the years of turmoil. He did not sympathise with the Constitutional movement which seemed to him, with his Christian anarchist attitude, to be merely an attempt to expel evil by means of evil. Still less did he sympathise with the reaction.

Tolstoy's eightieth birthday on August 28 (O.S.), 1908, was the signal for an outburst of popular enthusiasm which the measures taken by the Government to repress its manifestation only served to deepen. During the later years the spiritual struggle that all his life long had given Tolstoy no rest deepened in intensity, and in November, 1910, all Russia and all the world were startled by the news that the old man had made the final renunciation, that he had gone out from his home into the night, accompanied by his daughter and his secretary to live the remnant of his days wholly and

unreservedly in accordance with the truth as he perceived it. There was the journey to a monastery, the attempt to travel southwards to the Black Sea coast, the illness, the last days on the wayside station of Astapovo, the quiet passing, and then the impressive laying to rest in the presence of a great throng, without incense or priestly prayer, in the garden of Yasnaya Polyana.

The days when Tolstoy lay dying were days of national exaltation such as only those who lived in the midst of it can realise. It was as though a wave of purifying and uplifting emotion had swept across the country revealing the best that was in every man. And this high and solemn emotion lingered on for many weeks after Tolstoy was at rest.

During the following years Tolstoy's manuscripts were sifted by his daughter, and there was given to the world a posthumous series of novels and tales that seemed like a projection of the best traditions of the older literature into a new and swiftly changing world, a sober reminder that Russian literature if it be many-sided is still one, and that its great sacrifice is not sheer folly, but a foretaste of overcoming.

On Dostoievsky's grave in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, just outside the busiest quarter of St. Petersburg, are inscribed the words that he used as the motto of his *Brothers Karamazov*: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." There are no words that more truly express the spirit and meaning of Russian literature.

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC

No people in the world is altogether unmusical, but there are some peoples for whom music is an exception, an occasional yielding to innate human impulse, and there are others for whom it is a rule and a delight. When Professor Oldenburg, the secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, visited Chinese Turkestan a few years ago he was struck by the fact that the people, in spite of dire poverty, in spite of the oppression of Chinese officials, were irrepressibly musical, that they were constantly breaking into song. It seemed to Professor Oldenburg that such an invincibly light-hearted people must be of Aryan race even though it spoke Turkish. But a neighbouring Turkish nomad people, the Kirghizes, are gifted both poetically and musically. The Volga Tartars, again, another people of Turkish tongue, though they have songs of their own, sometimes very touching and melodious, cannot be described as musical.

Music.

The Russians are a people for whom music is a delight. The air is full of music and the people are always humming a song or thrumming an instrument. Of all the books in the book-hawker's bag none have a better sale than the song-books. During haymaking songs come floating across the fields and the peasant women sing when they are picking fruit or gathering peas and beans or digging potatoes. On Sundays and holidays the girls of the village walk to and fro in pairs singing endlessly. The youths follow, one of them playing an accordion. The balalaika, a sort of triangular guitar, was formerly the favourite instrument of the peasants, but the accordion is fast superseding it, and is used to accompany the older Russian dances which are still popular in many villages, as well as the new-fangled Western dances, the pas d'Espagne and so forth, which are rapidly spreading

over the country together with town finery. In the first, more good-humoured stage of drunkenness a Russian workman, cabman, or peasant almost invariably sings hoarsely and discordantly some wildly sentimental song, although an interruption of the song may very easily lead to a torrent of violent oaths and the breaking of limbs. But it is curious how persistently a drunken peasant will resume his trolling even after frequent interruption; there could hardly be a clearer indication of the inevitableness of song for the Russian peasant as a means of expressing emotion.

A Singing People.

From the very dawn of their history the Russians have been a singing people. They worked, they danced, they revelled to the accompaniment of music. The " bayan " or bard, the singer of heroic songs was a prominent figure at the courts of the early Russian princes, and the " guslar " or player on the " gusli " or lyre was always present at the feasts of warriors or merchants. The " skomorokhy " or jesters jested in song, and in spite of perpetual ecclesiastical prohibitions of the secular songs or " devil's music " that celebrated pagan deities or expressed a sheer reckless delight in living, the people clung to these songs and handed them down from generation to generation, words and melody closely linked in characteristic unity. The Russians, including the Great Russians of the North, the White Russians of the West, and the Little Russians of the South, have preserved an extraordinary wealth of folk-song, which was diligently recorded during the first half of the nineteenth century by a number of collectors, while even now careful gleaners in remote country districts may still gather fresh songs to add to the rich harvest. There are songs of the seasons, ritual songs reminiscent of the days of nature-worship and celebrating the return of the sun after the shortest day, the coming of spring and the summer equinox, all dates of primary importance in the husbandman's calendar. These songs were later adapted to the Christian festivals of Christmas, Whitsuntide,

and St. John's Eve, but they retain, hardly disguised, the traces of their heathen origin. The complex ceremony of peasant weddings was, and in many places still is, accompanied with endless singing. There are splendid epic songs, the so-called *byliny* relating the exploits of semi-historical, semi-mythical personages in the regions of Kiev, Novgorod, and Moscow. And lyrics of love, warfare, and death, unconnected with seasons, ritual observances or historical events are to be heard in every corner of Russia on any day of the year. A number of the songs sung by Russian workmen during their work have been used by the German Professor Bucher in support of his theory that the rhythm of poetry and song had its origin in the rhythm of the physical effort of lifting heavy weights, or hauling, dragging, sawing, or rowing.

Nearly all these songs are traditional, and though certain districts have lyrics of their own, not a few of the songs are spread over wide areas, which is not surprising considering the wandering habits of the people and the lack of natural barriers. But there are frequent variations, both in words and melody, and these variations are by no means always due to errors of transmission. They are often simply the result of the play of the artistic instinct. This is particularly true of variations in melody. When peasants sing there is often a combination of solo and chorus, and in the chorus there is a kind of part singing which as often as not seems to be based on free improvisation, with rollicking twists and twirls and a racing above and below the melody. The soloist, too, often makes variations on the melody while retaining the fundamental pattern with sufficient exactness to make it clearly recognisable.

In Russian folk-songs words and music are hardly separable, while often both are so intimately connected with dancing that the sound of them sets a peasant's feet involuntarily tripping or his hands clapping. The words alone fail to give the full effect of the song, though with their rhythm, their reiteration, their assonance and their striking imagery the

VILLAGERS DANCING

songs as pure lyrics make a strong appeal to the imagination, and through Pushkin and other poets influenced the development of Russian literature in the last century. But it is the strange, quaint melody of the songs that lifts the words out of that region of folk-rhetoric in which they frequently seem to linger, and carry them home. These melodies are as truly expressive of the national spirit as the language itself, are indeed in some way linked with the language and present more definitely, with greater liberty from the necessities of concrete description, the music that is implicit in the language. There are resemblances between Russian melodies and those of other Slav peoples like the Poles and the Czechs, and to a slighter extent, those of the Baltic peoples, the Lithuanians and the Letts. A few resemblances have been noted, too, between Russian and Finnish melodies, but these latter are probably the result of borrowing, and the marvel is, considering the infectious character of the popular airs, that so few parallels to Russian folk-music have been found among the neighbouring peoples. The folk-song is most characteristically Russian, and while in Little Russian melodies there are occasionally approximations to West European melodic structure, the Great Russian folk-song seems to have a style absolutely distinct from that of the Germanic and Romance peoples, and, as far as is known, from that of Eastern music. But the possible remoter connections of Russian folk-music have hardly been studied yet, and in any case the music has such a distinctive quality of its own, that it may well be taken as the best Russian composers have taken it, as a basis for the development of a national school of music.

Russian folk-music must be heard in its natural environment to be truly appreciated. Transferred to the concert-hall it nearly always suffers some modification that mars its native quality. Composers in transcribing or adapting it frequently introduce intervals that are suggestive of Western rather than Russian

Folk-song.

music, harmonise it in a conventional manner, try to smooth down its roughness and to prevent its seeming to the average listener too odd and too remote. Sung under such conditions by ladies and gentlemen in evening dress to the accompaniment of stringed instruments that are popular only in name but are in reality as artificial as all the appurtenances of the concert-hall, the Russian folk-song is only a faint and muffled echo of its original self. It cannot, in fact, be transferred to the concert-hall as a song. But that is not to say that it must be left to perish in its native fields, as it is bound to perish with the extension of technical civilisation. It will continue to serve as it has served for the last fifty years as material for modern composers. As themes in symphonies, sonatas, orchestral accompaniments, and as operatic airs these spontaneous melodies will live on in a more complex world of art.

It is when you get away from the neighbourhood of the railway line into some sleepy region where the "sokha" or wooden plough is still in use, and where men wear curious, old-fashioned hats instead of the peaked caps common near the towns, that there is hope of hearing Russian songs in something like their purity. Best of all if the women are singing in the fields during harvesting. Perhaps their voices are harsh, perhaps they show a tendency to sing through the nose, but when they are singing in chorus, cheering each other at work among yellow sheaves on the riverside in the light of the afternoon sun the harmony between people, landscape, and the plaintive melody of the song seems complete. What seems to us the plaintiveness of most Russian melodies does not, however, mean that they are necessarily sad. Perhaps this apparent plaintiveness is simply the expression of some intimate correspondence between the Russian mind and that great expanse which has been the home of the Russians for centuries. But there is a wide play of varied emotion in these folk-melodies. Sometimes they express monotony, sorrow, solitude, as in the very familiar melody

of the song, " One birch tree in the field," in which the fourfold reiteration of a slowly-falling cadence at the end of sets of three bars gives a peculiar effect of hopeless loneliness. The wedding songs, too, are very mournful, the bride constantly expressing her bitter grief at leaving her home, her father and mother, and going out to a cheerless life among strangers. The gloominess of the Russian peasant woman's attitude to marriage is striking. To judge by the songs and by the wailing of the relatives it might be imagined that marriage was a calamity hardly less grave than death itself. But the songs again bear witness to the contrary, and though maidens frequently complain in songs of their sad and bitter lot and of the faithlessness and the " consciencelessness " of lovers, they often sing very artfully of their victories. It is remarkable, indeed, how much real humour there is in many Russian melodies, and how much humour the peasant youths and maidens can put into them by means of appropriate gestures and modifications of the voice. Often the humour of Russian melodies consists in a kind of parody on plaintiveness, sometimes in the arch trippingness of songs that go on and on endlessly eluding pursuit. Not only is there humour in Russian airs, but there is a fine rollicking sense of space and freedom not altogether unlike that which is found in the older English sea-songs. It is the sense of the steppe, or of broad rivers like the Volga, the Dnieper, or the Don, or of the Black Sea over which Cossacks roved in their plundering expeditions. It is the delight in a *shirokoie razdolie*, a broad rolling expanse in which a man can draw deep breath, shake off all trammels and feel the strength that is in him. All this is in the Russian folk-melodies and a world of emotion besides. Not all the melodies are quaint and stirring. Some are simply dull and colourless, and others are depressing. Folk-songs are not always charming simply because they are folk-songs. There are many points at which inspiration fails just as in the world of art, and often instead of new melodies one finds simply combinations or adaptations of

well-known airs. But even making allowance for such waste spaces there is such a wealth of melody, such an originality in Russian folk-music that even custom, the accordion, and the gramophone itself cannot stale its infinite variety. When one gets a little weary of Great Russian music one can turn to the music of Little Russia, and indeed, there is no chance of one ever growing sated, for the older folk-music is gradually slipping away from the hearts of the people who alone can keep it living a natural life.

Decline of Folk-song.

It is melancholy that the folk-songs should be disappearing, but it is inevitable that it should be so. The people would not be the people if in face of a general modernisation of life it preserved its customs, its costumes, and its songs exactly in the form in which archaeologists and ethnologists and all lovers of the beauty of an older day seen in the perspective of the twentieth century would like to have them kept. Peasants are not figures in a museum. They are living human beings whose main concern is to live as best they can in a changing world. They wear leather boots instead of bast shoes, if they can buy them. And it is just as natural that they should abandon the reed-whistle for the balalaika and the balalaika for the accordion. After all it is not very certain whether the balalaika was originally a Russian instrument. It may have been borrowed from the Tartars, or adapted from a Kirghiz instrument of a similar type named the "domra." The "gusli," a kind of zither, another instrument that has almost disappeared, may not be purely Russian in spite of its Slavonic name. The neighbouring peoples, both Turkish and Finnish, have similar instruments, and perhaps the gusli was borrowed long since from the Greek South, just as the accordion has been borrowed at a later day from the German West. Since the peasants change their instruments it seems natural that they should change their songs too. A few of the folk-songs have come into the town and are sung without spirit by underpaid Government

clerks in uniform making anaemic efforts to be cheerful in the white nights of May in summer cottages on the outskirts of St. Petersburg. But for a half-dozen devitalised folk-songs that find their way into the towns a hundred tinkling town songs find their way into the country. The true folk-song is being replaced by the *chastushka*, or topical ditty, representing a state of mind which is shallow and commonplace compared with that represented in the folk-song. The factories, which lump together large masses of men and women, blur their individuality and cut them off from the calming and healing influences of nature are very largely responsible for this. The songs born of minds wearied by a long day's mechanical work indoors to the sound of roaring machines cannot possibly have the freshness and the depth of the songs of the forest and the open field. They are of necessity shallow and sentimental, and the airs to which they are sung will be imitations of the cheap and sentimental airs made familiar through the gramophone or through such cheap concert-halls as the workers may have access to. The factory songs quickly find their way to the country, and so, instead of pretty appeals to the winds to bear a message to a lover about a dream his maiden dreamed about a broken ring, the village girls on holidays walk about arm in arm singing to a colourless and sentimental air a song of town life telling how " Evening falls, the compositors are going (to work), and poor Marusia is being carried to the Obukhov Hospital " (in St. Petersburg). Then follow lustreless verses describing how Marusia's friends asked the doctor and the nurse to let them see her ; but Marusia was already in the morgue, and in the end they learned that she had poisoned herself for love.

One may mourn that the quaint old songs should be thrust into oblivion in favour of such dreary banalities. But it must be admitted that songs about compositors, hospitals, and suicide make a much more direct appeal to peasant girls living around the St. Petersburg of to-day than picturesque

old songs descriptive of the exploits of the insurgent Stenka Razin on the Volga. There is more art in the older songs, but the spontaneity of popular art fades away in the atmosphere of the modern towns. The native impulse must, under the changed conditions, be supported by the resources of modern art. But there are difficulties which will be referred to later. The " chastushki " are often freely improvised on current events or on well-known persons in the village by more or less skilful singers. With a given pattern of metre and melody and considerable room for disposing of superfluous syllables such composition presents no insuperable obstacles. Collections of " chastushki " have been made which have a certain value as documents of the period, but are musically and poetically trivial. More interesting is another and earlier type of song which has to a large extent taken the place of the folk-song. It is hard to give this type a general name; perhaps if the most recent type is to be described as the factory ditty, the more indefinite type may be described as the song of the artisans and petty tradesmen who felt the modernising influences of the nineteenth century before the factory had attained its present dimensions. But the type includes regimental songs as well, and the army has been and is, in its way, almost as effective as a levelling force as the factory itself. The difference between the army and the factory in this respect is that the former naturally maintains a closer contact with tradition, especially with the fighting tradition of the nation. These regimental songs, and the songs of the petty tradesmen and artisans long ago became the stock music of the " traktirs," or popular eating and drinking houses and many acquired a traditional character, so that frequently they were confused with the genuine folk-songs. In the song-books in circulation among the people it is these songs that hold the chief place, and Nadiëzhda Plevitskaia, a peasant woman from Kursk who a few years ago made a momentary sensation in the capitals as a singer of folk-songs had hardly a real folk-song in her répertoire.

What she sang was simply such a well-known pseudo-folk-song as "The bold young merchant Ukhar," or that song about the great fire of Moscow in which Napoleon is described as standing in a grey overcoat and saying to himself with "the still voice of consciousness" that "Fate plays with man and is fickle ever."

Another type of song that is often confused with the folk-song is that of the songs sung by the gipsy choirs which perform in the larger restaurants frequented chiefly by the merchants. Occasionally these choirs do sing real folk-songs, occasionally real gipsy airs, but just as often as not the songs they sing have found their way to Russia from town to town, from restaurant to restaurant right across Europe. If the gipsy choirs have a remote connection with the people on one side, they are much more closely connected on the other with that café-chantant world which in various ways passes on to the people trivial and facile modern airs that are caught up as a makeshift for interpreting the hasty and superficial emotions of a new time.

Gipsy Songs.

The people is, in fact, musically in a helpless position at the present moment. All sorts of natural forces are crowding out the quaint, distinctive, traditional folk-music, and flooding the country with nondescript, semi-European airs. The people submits to this natural process. The striving of the younger generation after modernity, polish, gentility, is perforce satisfied by the musical scraps flung down by the noisy machinery of European civilisation in the dreary, dusty, untidy streets in the workmen's quarter on the outskirts of the great cities. The people is unable to exercise any selective power, and so far it has been helped very little. A great deal could be done to develop native musical taste by the organisation of popular choirs, as is shown by the example of the Finns, Letts, and Esthonians, whose village choirs and annual choral festivals in various towns in Finland, in Reval,

Modern Influence on Native Music.

in Esthonia, and in Riga, the Lettish centre, have done a very great deal to raise the general level of musical capacity in the respective nationalities. In Russia only sporadic attempts have been made so far to organise popular choirs —in connection with certain philanthropic institutions in the towns, for instance—and, indeed, the villages have been hitherto so neglected in the most essential respects that probably other forms of organisation, such as fire-brigades and co-operative societies, will have to precede that of glee-clubs. Until recently the political conditions were such as to prevent all kinds of organising work among the peasantry, but it now seems possible that village choirs will soon take their place among the many factors of change that are rapidly transforming country life in Russia.

One of the impediments to secular musical organisation in the country, and to a large extent in the towns also, is that there is no centre around which to organise. In Finland, Esthonia, and in the Lettish country, the Church, which in these regions is Protestant, serves very frequently as the necessary rallying-point if there is no other centre sufficiently influential. But the Orthodox Church does not encourage the cultivation of secular music within its precincts. Attempts made during the early part of the nineteenth century to hold concerts in connection with church services were soon put a stop to, and though the Church does not oppose good secular music now as it did the folk-music of the older time, it does not give any opportunities for disseminating it among the people. The musical instruction it gives is like all the instruction in the parish schools purely ecclesiastical. But it is fortunate that it does at any rate give instruction in ecclesiastical music, and through the parish choirs maintains a certain level of musical taste in a time of rapid change.

Church music occupies a position akin to popular music as a source of modern developments. In its way Russian church music is very national and distinctive, though it certainly shows more traces of foreign influence than the

folk-song. There is at least as much modern art as ancient tradition in the magnificent singing of the Metropolitan's Choir in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg, for all that it seems to untrained ears so strikingly Eastern. But there is a real basis of Eastern tradition. Russian church music is derived from that of the Greek church of Constantinople and from the music of the early Bulgarian church. The tradition was handed down through the troubled middle-ages of Russian history, partly by means of a notation called the "signs," or the "hooks," partly through occasional reinforcements of Greek ecclesiastics for whose benefit the Greek text was long retained side by side with the Slavonic in the service-books. But there were natural variations in the course of the centuries, and radical reforms were effected in the time of Ivan the Terrible and during the seventeenth century. During Catherine's reign French and Italian influences made themselves felt in church music, hardly to its advantage, and all through the nineteenth century there was a conflict between a Westernising and a nationalist school of ecclesiastical music.

The Music of the Church.

Russian church music thus bears a composite character, and several of the most popular masses composed during the last century have a predominantly Western and modern colouring. Towards the end of the century several specialists in church music, of whom Feodor Lvovsky and Stepan Smolensky were the chief, did a great deal in transposing for modern use ancient Russian, Greek, and Bulgarian music. The intrusion of foreign elements, though it sometimes lessens the impressiveness of Russian church music, has not availed to rob it of its distinctiveness, and indeed the whole ritual of the Eastern service sets certain very definite limits to change. The Slavonic language of the prayers has a regulative effect upon the music, and all the Greek suggestions in ritual terminology, in vestments, and other ecclesiastical forms prevent a too sudden break with tradition. Several

of the best modern Russian composers like Chaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov have paid considerable attention to ecclesiastical music, and Chaikovsky's liturgy is sung every year on Whitsunday in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg. Concerts of church music are frequently given in the capitals, but in the concert-hall such music seems to lose its essential quality and to become too plainly modern and uninteresting. There is a Choirmasters' Society in St. Petersburg, and in all the towns and villages of the Empire priests, deacons, monks, cantors, and choirmasters or *regenty* make efforts to spread the knowledge of ecclesiastical singing as a branch of ritual observance. In all this there is a great deal that is coldly official, a great deal of uninspired effort to furbish up, modernise and popularise tradition. But singing is singing, and Russian church music at its very worst never lacks some touching note of other-worldliness, while at its highest it subtly stirs in a way that no other music can a strange complex of worshipping emotion in which predominates a humbling and deeply penitent sense of sin.

The older church music is retained to a large extent in the services of the Old Believers, whose nasal mode of singing resembles that practised in Greek churches in the East at the present day. The music of the other Russian sects presents a wide and interesting field for study. Sometimes the psalms and hymns of the Dissenters are sung to familiar fragments of church music, but very often, and this is particularly true of the hymns of the Khlysty and the Skoptsy, folk-songs, folk-melodies form the basis of their psalmody. The modern Westernising sects adapt for their own use English and American revival hymns. There is one other type of song that may be included in the category of popular music, namely, the revolutionary songs that were in vogue a few years ago. They were not popular songs in the strict sense of the word. Most of them were written by students or other educated revolutionaries. The melodies were not original, but were adapted from folk-songs and other

familiar airs. There was an adaptation of the Marseillaise, and one of the most affecting of all the revolutionary songs was sung to the music of a well-known military funeral march. It is curious that the revolutionary period did not produce a single song of original poetical beauty and deep passion, and this is especially noticeable if the revolutionary songs are compared with some of the sectarian hymns—those of the sect of the New Israel for instance—produced during the same period. Perhaps the moment of political upheaval is unfavourable to artistic production, and in any case in Russia the revolution as a political movement did not find striking expression either in literature or art, and certainly not in music.

Modern Developments.

All the manifold forms of traditional and popular music have served as a basis for the development of a modern school of Russian music. Such a musical people as the Russian could not fail in adapting the technique of Western civilisation to its own uses to express itself in the forms of modern music. And here it had less ground to make up than in other spheres of art, modern music being after all such a recent discovery. French and Italian music had a certain influence in Russia at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in the first half of the nineteenth century there were obscure quasi-national composers, most of whom are forgotten now except Lvov, the author of the National Anthem, "God save the Tsar." It was not until towards the middle of the century that a genuinely national school of music took its rise in the work of those three who may be regarded as the pioneers of modern Russian music. Glinka's national opera, *Life for the Tsar*, was produced in 1836 in St. Petersburg, and had a great and immediate success. But this was only a brief gleam. Italian opera secured for many years a monopoly of the St. Petersburg stage, and Glinka's masterpiece did not secure permanent success until the 'sixties, when a new era began for music as for all other forms

of public activity. But Glinka did not live to see the brighter day. His life was a sad and restless one and he had the disappointments of the pioneer and few of his joys, except the one inalienable joy of hearing sweet sounds that no others could hear. When he was a little boy he delighted in the sound of church bells that came floating in through the windows of his home in the government of Smolensk. He conceived a passion for folk-songs, and it was he who later made the first really successful attempts to embody folk-melodies in operatic music. He travelled far and wide, visiting the Caucasus which made a deep and ineffaceable impression upon him as it did upon his contemporaries, the poets Pushkin and Lermontov, and spending four years study in Italy, towards which in the 'thirties the eyes of Russian artists were constantly turned. Seven months' work in Berlin gave Glinka a more thorough and intimate knowledge of musical theory. The comparative failure of his opera, *Ruslan and Ludmila*, on its production in St. Petersburg in 1842, sent the restless composer abroad again. He gave concerts in Paris with his friend and admirer Berlioz as conductor, wandered to Spain where he collected folk-songs, and roved constantly between St. Petersburg, Smolensk, and Paris until his death in 1857. Like many wanderers he suffered keenly from home-sickness, and it was his home-sickness that accentuated his national feelings and impelled him to write the first Russian national opera and deliberately to devote himself to the work of establishing a distinctively Russian style in music.

Glinka.

Glinka exercised on his contemporaries and his immediate successors an influence that is difficult at the present day to appreciate. Much of his music retains its attractiveness, though his methods have been so frequently made use of by others that they have lost the charm of freshness. Glinka anticipated Wagner, for instance, in his use of the leit-motiv. Moreover, Glinka's style is by no means purely Russian, and there are

many traces of Italian influence. His *Life for the Tsar*, based on the story of how Michael Feodorovich, the founder of the Romanov dynasty, was saved from pursuing Poles by a peasant named Ivan Susanin who led the Polish troops astray in the forest and was killed by them when they discovered the ruse, has become a standard patriotic opera, and owes its popularity as much to the familiarity arising from frequent performance as to the real beauties it undoubtedly possesses. But these beauties are sporadic, and foreigners find it difficult to share the admiration of many Russians for the opera as a whole. Much superior to *Life for the Tsar* as a work of art is *Ruslan and Ludmila*, based on a delightful fantasy of Pushkin's, although it was not until twenty years after its earliest production that *Ruslan and Ludmila* secured that position in the first rank of Russian operas which it occupies to this day. Glinka composed a number of songs and instrumental works which are still occasionally performed, but his fame rests mainly on the two operas which keep fresh the memory of that powerful creative impulse in which modern Russian music had its birth. He died in Berlin at the age of fifty-three, disappointed and embittered, one of the causes that hastened his death being, it is said, a letter of Rubinstein's in a German newspaper ridiculing the attempt to found a Russian national school of music. A monument of a cheerlessly official type has been erected to his memory near the St. Petersburg Opera House and Conservatoire in the street that bears his name.

Glinka's contemporary, Dargomyzhsky, is chiefly known as the author of the still popular opera *Rusalka*, the subject of which is drawn from a poetical fragment of Pushkin's. His unfinished opera, *The Stone Guest*, which is based on another fragment in which Pushkin treated the Don Juan legend and was completed after the composer's death by Rimsky Korsakov and César Cui, has not been produced of recent years though preparations have been made for its revival. As a song-writer

Dargomyzhsky.

Dargomyzhsky was much more successful than Glinka, and many of his songs in spite of their old-fashioned form continue to charm and to delight. His orchestral works, such as *A Finnish Fantasy*, are full of suggestions which were later developed by other composers. Dargomyzhsky seems to have had a strong vein of humour, but he lived in a cheerless and baffling time, his artistic path was strewn with disappointments, and the impression he leaves is one of rich possibilities only half realised. Like Glinka he was a forerunner. Both had inadequate means at their disposal, but both were enthusiastic in their efforts to give musical expression to the manifold emotions of that brilliant period of intellectual awakening which produced such writers as Pushkin, Lermontov, and Gogol.

Sérov.

Alexander Nicholaievich Sérov, the third prominent composer of the Glinka period was less talented, if more learned than either Glinka or Dargomyzhsky. He was known as an able musical critic before he came before the world as a composer, and it is as a critic that he rendered his greatest services. His operas *Rognieda* and *Hostile Forces* are rarely produced nowadays, and another opera of his, *Judith*, holds its position on the stage because in it the part of Holofernes is sung by such an incomparable artist as Shaliapin. Sérov's figure has been rescued from the oblivion into which it was fast sinking by the very interesting memoirs recently published by his widow, herself a composer, who has devoted herself to the popularisation of music and is erecting in a village near Chudovo in the Novgorod government a choral amphitheatre for the production of operas by amateur peasant companies.

Dargomyzhsky and Sérov lived to see the beginnings of an era of fulfilment. Russian music sprang into vigorous life in the sixties when the breath of renewal passed through the whole social and political structure of the Empire. A talented group of young composers appeared and carried on with energy the work of Glinka and Dargomyzhsky in the development of a national school of music. This group was

called the Balákirev circle, from the name of its leader, and later came to be known familiarly as the *moguchaia kuchka*, or the " mighty clique." In France it is spoken of as " Les Cinq," since it consisted of five members, Balákirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Musorgsky, and César Cui. The traditions of the group are still fresh. César Cui is still living, and may frequently be seen at St. Petersburg concerts. Balákirev died in 1910, and Rimsky-Korsakov in 1908. Borodin died as long ago as 1887, and Musorgsky in 1881 at a comparatively early age. The members of the group differed greatly from one another in character and in the nature of their talent. They did not even constitute a school in the strictest sense of the word, for after a few years of ardent co-operation they drifted apart, each composer taking a path of his own, growing differences in views and methods leading in certain cases to estrangement. The imperious talent of Balákirev which united the group at the beginning gradually ceased to exercise commanding authority over the other members. But a strongly national spirit characterised all, except perhaps Cui, who is of French extraction, and in this sense the group together with other composers who were closely associated with its members may justly be described as the New Russian School. Balákirev and Rimsky-Korsakov were ardent admirers of Glinka, and both carefully studied folk-music and collected and harmonised folk-songs. Their nationalism was no mere patriotic masquerade. It was something inseparable from their artistic instinct, from the very nature of their talent. It represented an effort to express the Russian spirit in music which was just as legitimate as the effort of Pushkin and his successors to express the same spirit in poetry, or that of Turgeniev and Tolstoy to express it in prose. The development of music in Russia ran parallel, in fact, with the development of literature, and the Slavophil and populist influences which made themselves felt in literature stimulated nationalism in music. But music, since it approaches more nearly to the absolute

than any of the other arts, fortunately largely escaped the effect of those anti-aesthetic tendencies which impeded the growth of literature in the 'eighties and 'nineties. Those who denied art on general grounds might continue to occupy themselves with literature in some form, if only to condemn literature. But music they simply ignored. And the national school of music vindicated itself in such strikingly original work as Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, Rimsky-Korsakov's long series of brilliant operas, and the admirable songs and instrumental pieces of Balákirev and Cui.

Anton Rubinstein.

But the national school had to fight a continual battle against opponents at home. The pianist, Anton Rubinstein, for instance, was an advocate of cosmopolitanism in music. It was just before the rise of the national school that Rubinstein assumed in the history of musical development that prominent position which he continued to hold for the remainder of his life. Born in 1829 he made his début as a pianist in Moscow at the age of nine and in Paris at the age of eleven, after which he toured in England, Holland, Sweden, and Germany with striking success. For five years he studied the theory of music abroad, Meyerbeer being one of his teachers and Mendelssohn one of his warmest admirers, and on his return to Russia he became musical adviser at the court of the enlightened Grand Duchess Elena Pavlona. He was the first director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, opened in 1862, and he was incessantly active as a pianist and composer. Of his genius as a pianist, of his unrivalled touch, of that power of interpretation that was tantamount to re-creation all Europe and America had frequent opportunity to judge. He was extraordinarily prolific as a composer, but the general estimate of his work in this respect is expressed in the familiar dictum, "Chaikovsky wrote so much that it is not surprising that some of his compositions were poor, and Rubinstein wrote so much that it is no wonder

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that some of his were good."[1] It is not as a composer that Rubinstein ranks high in Russian musical history, but as an interpreter and a populariser. The " purple patches " that from time to time occur in his compositions are separated by long tracts of undistinguished fluency. Many of his pianoforte pieces and his symphonies still enjoy popularity in Russia, but of the twenty operas that he wrote, including four " religious operas," or musical dramas on Biblical subjects, the only one that is now staged is *The Demon*, which owes its continued popularity less to Rubinstein's music than to Lermontov's romantic poem which forms the basis of the libretto. Rubinstein was conservative and cosmopolitan in his musical tastes, and in general an opponent of the Russian national school of music. His occasional attempts to write in the national spirit ended in failure, but at times he succeeded in giving his music a distinctive and original oriental colouring. In his efforts to spread a knowledge and love of music among the general public Rubinstein was unwearying. He was the chief founder of the Russian Musical Society, which now has branches in all parts of Russia, and, in spite of various defects, has done most important work in raising the general standard of musical taste, and in firmly establishing the conception of music as an art with lofty claims. Rubinstein's concerts, particularly his historical concerts, were of great educative value. In the 'seventies and 'eighties he was one of the most popular figures in the Russian capitals, and his square, bulky form, and leonine, Beethoven-like head, with the thick masses of hair and the rugged forehead were familiar in all public assemblies.

Nicholas Rubinstein.

Anton Rubinstein's brother Nicholas also possessed extraordinary talent as a pianist, and as the head of the Moscow branch of the Russian Musical Society and the Moscow Conservatoire he greatly stimulated the development of musical culture. Like his brother he was a Westerner in his musical tastes, although by his concerts he did a great deal to popularise

Russian music in Western Europe. Chaikovsky owed much to his influence. Nicholas Rubinstein possessed, in fact, as a musical pedagogue such a marked and forceful individuality that the tradition he established has not yet wholly lost its hold on the present generation of Moscow composers.

With both Anton and Nicholas Rubinstein, Balákirev and his associates found themselves in conflict on the question of the relative merits of Russian national and cosmopolitan music, cosmopolitan music being, as the nationalists insisted, simply German music under another name.

But the nationalists were very far from condemning German music, they acknowledged their great debt to Beethoven and were ardent admirers of Schumann and Berlioz and also of Liszt, with whom Balákirev was on very friendly terms. They insisted, however, on the autonomous rights of Russian music, both as regards form and spirit. Hand in hand with their nationalism went a tendency to deprecate the importance of musical training, and to leave inspiration untrammelled by theory. They could point to the example of Dargomyzhsky who had written beautiful work despite his lack of training in form, in fact Dargomyzhsky openly expressed his contempt for musical learning. Balákirev had an unerring instinct for form that made up for the lack of systematic schooling in music, and perhaps it was this fact that made him impatient of efforts to promote systematic musical training in Russia and explains his hostility to the establishment of the St. Petersburg and Moscow Conservatoires in the early sixties. He dreaded that official Conservatoires might have the effect of establishing musical mediocrity, and for his part he would only encourage talent. But he was a stern taskmaster to his associates, and they owed much of their skill to his hard lessons. Musorgsky, a young officer, was simply brimming over with musical talent, but he rebelled against the efforts of the Balákirev group to induce him to study theory and to elaborate the formal side of his work. He and Rimsky-Korsakov lived

Balákirev.

together for a time in the early seventies, and he was greatly indebted to his friend's suggestions, but later he slipped away from all discipline, drank heavily, listened to endless laudations of his genius from boon-companions and finally died in delirium tremens.

Borodin was a professor of chemistry, and was a distinguished scientific investigator as well as a talented composer.

Borodin.

But he lived in delightful disorder. His rooms were constantly besieged by students, and the remarkable works he did produce were like flowers that grew wild amidst a litter of very varied and interesting occupations. It is characteristic that the best work of both Musorgsky and Borodin was set in order, arranged or completed by Rimsky-Korsakov.

Rimsky-Korsakov was a very different kind of man from the other members of the group.

Rimsky-Korsakov.

In his youth he was a naval officer, and after showing Balákirev some early work in which his talent was clearly displayed, he went off on a three years' cruise. On his return he once more came under Balákirev's influence, and again began to compose, learning the rules of composition in practice. It was the Balákirev way, and it was a very good way for men of talent and fine musical instinct. But Rimsky Korsakov was not only talented but conscientious, and when, in 1871, he was invited to occupy in the St. Petersburg Conservatoire the chair of composition and instrumentation, he shrank from accepting because, as he said, though he was the author of such works as *Sadko*, *Pskovitianka*, and *Antara*, which had been favourably received, he could not harmonise a chorale, he had never written an exercise in counterpoint, he had only the vaguest idea of the structure of a fugue, and was ignorant of much of musical terminology and of the technique of various instruments. But having been induced to accept the chair he set to work to fill up the gaps in his knowledge and in a few years became one of the most thorough masters of musical theory and practice in Russia. In his

later works he paid the closest attention to details of form and revised his own compositions again and again, besides editing the work of his associates and predecessors, and giving constant counsel that has borne valuable fruit in the work of the younger Russian composers. With Rimsky-Korsakov, however, form was never supreme over inspiration, but only gave firmness of outline and clearness of expression to the strong impulse of his rich talent. He was the most persistent and most prolific worker of all the members of the Balákirev group, and maintained throughout his life a rare serenity of outlook. He was an optimist, his work is a constant affirmation of life, is full of colour and movement, and is often suggestive of that of a man so different in many respects from Rimsky-Korsakov as William Morris. His delight in the world of ancient Russian history and Eastern legend, his pantheistic view of nature, his humour, his sense of the beauty of dream are all co-ordinated and controlled by a sensitive, artistic conscience which is closely akin to that moral delight in overcoming which pervaded his work and his life. National feeling was for him a perpetual source of inspiration. He recalls how an invitation to an estate in the Tver government once aroused in him such a sudden and keen enthusiasm for the very soil and heart of Russia that on the strength of it he sat down and wrote anew one of the choruses in *Pskovitianka*. He was happy in his home life, honoured as a professor and later as the Director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, and from the later 'eighties onward wielded commanding influence in the Russian musical world. He held aloof from politics, but in 1905 he took the side of the students of the Conservatoire in a moment of unrest and was deprived of his post for doing so—the result naturally being an outburst of enthusiasm on his behalf. Rimsky-Korsakov was a strong and a happy man, one of the few Russian artists who have attained inner harmony.

It is interesting to compare Rimsky-Korsakov's nationalism

with that of Balákirev. The leader of the group of five had by no means such an outwardly successful career as that of his most distinguished pupil. In opposition to Rubinstein and the so-called German school with its Conservatoire, Balákirev founded a Free Musical School for the encouragement of musical talent, and for some years exercised great influence through this school and the concerts he conducted in connection with it. For a time, too, he even directed the concerts of the Russian Musical Society, an official institution in which the cosmopolitan school had its stronghold. But Balákirev fell on evil days. The concerts of the Free School proved financially a failure. The German school prevailed against him in the Musical Society and the composer was compelled to accept a position at £8 a month on the Warsaw railway. He became devoutly religious, fasted regularly, and in addition became an ardent Slavophil. Slavophil nationalism combined with Orthodoxy was antipathetic to Korsakov's pantheistic sentiment, and this circumstance partly accounted for the break between the two composers. But Rimsky-Korsakov later became Balákirev's assistant in the management of the Court Choir, and showed in his *Legend of the Sunken City of Kitezh* how deeply he could enter into the spirit of Orthodox mysticism.

There was a great variety, in fact, in the shades and forms of the nationalism of the Balákirev circle, but there was a striking unity in fundamental tendencies. What an astonishingly new world these composers opened up after all, and how endlessly rich it was! They drew on Russian history and on Russian legend. Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* treats of the Moscow tsar of that name, and his *Khovanshchina* of Khovansky, the commander of the *strieltsy* or regular troops, during the regency of the Princess Sophia, the half-sister of Peter the Great, that is to say, these operas deal with the troublous times at the beginning and the end of the seventeenth century. Borodin's *Prince Igor* is based on a beautiful poem of the Kiev period, and is full of the romance of the

conflict of the early Russians with the nomads of the steppes. Balákirev did not compose an opera, but he makes skilful use of Russian airs in his pianoforte and orchestral works, and his symphonic poem, *Rus*, is inspired by a review of the whole course of Russian history, while in another symphonic poem, *In Bohemia*, the composer gives expression to his Slavophil sympathies. In the long list of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas there is only one, *Mozart and Salieri*, based on a poem of Pushkin's, which does not deal with Russian subjects, historical or legendary. The titles of his operas indicate their character. *Sadko*, the hero of the most famous epic-song of the Novgorod cycle, was a young merchant who, by his singing, charmed the daughter of the King of the Sea, and set the King himself dancing in his realm under the waters. *Pskovitianka* deals with the life in the republican city of Pskov during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. *May Night* and *Christmas Eve* are fairy tales of Gogol's. *The Snow Maiden* and *Mlada* are heroines of fairy-tales. Into his symphonic works, too, Rimsky-Korsakov constantly wove Russian folk-melody.

It is curious that the Oriental spirit in Russian legend and even independently of Russian legend seems to have appealed to the composers of the national school in such a way as to suggest a close affinity between the Russian and the Oriental world. Musorgsky introduced a Persian dance into his *Khovanshchina* without the slightest apparent necessity. Some of the best of Balákirev's work was inspired by the Armenian, Georgian, and Persian music he heard during a visit to the Caucasus, and he describes the extraordinary impression made on him by an Eastern air heard in an open field in the Stavropol government in the silence of a moonlight summer night. This air he made use of in the Andante of his First Symphony. Balákirev's *Islamei* is a pianoforte piece of a vividly Oriental character, inspired by the music of a Kabardine dance. Oriental themes continually recur in the works of Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov.

César Cui, who in his younger days shared the ideals of the Balákirev group and fought its battles in the press, gradually lost touch with the more progressive members of the school, failed to develop his talent, and confined himself to the composition of melodramatic operas and graceful drawing-room songs. Cui is a general of engineers and a professor of fortification, and his works on military engineering equal his musical works in bulk.

César Cui.

In certain external respects much of the work of some members of the Balákirev group is now old-fashioned, and, just as in literature there are not a few writers who have attained a greater perfection of style than Turgeniev and Tolstoy, so there are composers at the present day who produce work that is more complex in form than a great deal of what Musorgsky, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov wrote. But what gives the work of the masters of the Russian school a permanent and unfading beauty is that original force of personality they display in their magnificent sweep of fantasy, and their sheer native strength of creative impulse. It is the rich vitality of their compositions that constitutes one of the chief motive forces in modern Russian musical development.

The other motive force is contained in the work of Chaikovsky. Chaikovsky held aloof from the Balákirev group. The son of a manager of ironworks in the government of Viatka he served for two years as a Government official after completing his studies in the School of Law, but in view of his striking musical gifts he was induced to enter the newly-founded St. Peters burg Conservatoire, where from 1862 to 1865 he studied composition under the director Zaremba and Anton Rubinstein. His connection with the Conservatoire effectually removed him from the sphere of influence of the Balákirev circle, which was bitterly hostile to the Conservatoire, Rubinstein and the Russian Musical Society. Chaikovsky came

Chaikovsky.

to be regarded as an eclectic in musical taste as opposed to the nationalist school. He was appointed professor of the theory of music in the Moscow Conservatoire, where Nicholas Rubinstein exerted a strong influence upon him, and this chair he retained until 1877, when the generosity of a benefactress whom he never met enabled him to devote himself entirely to composition. His earlier work was not appreciated by the public, and it was not until he produced in 1879 his opera, *Eugen Onegin*, a musical setting of Pushkin's best-known poem, that he gained a popular success. *Eugen Onegin* is to this day the favourite opera on the Russian stage. In the later 'nineties it enjoyed an extraordinary run of popularity, and the example set by the Emperor who named his daughters Olga and Tatiana after the heroines of the poem was eagerly followed in all ranks of society. Many lines of the poem are household words and airs from the opera are hummed everywhere. Another opera on a poem of Pushkin's, *The Queen of Spades*, which Chaikovsky wrote towards the end of his life, is always sure of a favourable hearing. His other operas, *Mazeppa* and *Charodieika*, are now rarely heard, while *The Little Shoes*, the subject of which is drawn from a story by Gogol, has only recently been revived. The *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Lake of Swans*, and the *Nut Cracker* established a new standard in Russian ballet-music. His songs are among those most frequently sung.

But it is as a composer of symphonies that Chaikovsky reached the height of his fame, both in Russia and abroad. His was a strange and complex nature, and he had a profound and constantly saddening sense of the complexity of life and the inexorable movement of fate. In his personal life there were many elements of tragedy which led to attempts at suicide. In striking contrast to Rimsky-Korsakov, who delighted in the expression of an all overcoming, all pervading harmony, Chaikovsky was pre-eminently sensitive to the beauty of defeat and loss, to the yearning poetry of a vain struggle of the soul with over-ruling powers. And the beauty

that he felt most keenly he expressed most powerfully in his symphonies, especially in the Sixth Symphony, the Pathétique, composed just before his death.

Chaikovsky had a remarkable power of developing the suggestions of other composers, and of transfusing a variety of alien influences—those of French and German schools, and also of the Russian school—into something wholly his own. He was a national composer, but not in the same sense in which Musorgsky, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov were. Though he frequently used national themes in his music, they are not so characteristic as that element of personal suffering which is the fundamental motive of his work. With the members of the Balákirev group he was never intimate, but when Balákirev was compelled, owing to the intrigues of his enemies, to retire in 1870 from the post of conductor of the concerts of the Russian Musical Society, Chaikovsky wrote an article strongly protesting against the injustice. When he died in 1893, in St. Petersburg, his funeral formed the occasion for a demonstration of popular sympathy such as had never before been accorded to any Russian composer. His memory is still fresh. A brass tablet indicates the house in Gogol Street in St. Petersburg where he spent the last few years of his life, and there are many middle-aged musicians who speak of him not as Chaikovsky, the famous composer, but affectionately as Piotr Iliich, who not so very long ago was conducting his own symphonies in that splendid Hall of the Nobles' Assembly which has witnessed so many of the triumphs and the defeats of Russian music. Russian criticism has not yet arrived at a settled estimate of the value of Chaikovsky's work. Some ardent supporters of living composers are impatient that the public should still be satisfied with his operas and symphonies, though as a matter of fact the public has grown restless and curious of new forms and combinations of sound, and there are many signs that, for the present, at any rate, Chaikovsky's popularity is on the wane. On the other hand, some of the most

independent and penetrating critics set the intrinsic value of Chaikovsky's music very high. They declare that as a force in Russian musical evolution he must be placed on a level with Glinka, and that no Russian artist, whether he be musician, painter, or poet, with the one exception of Dostoievsky, has such a profound sense as he of the mysteries of the inner life, and that his hopeless yearning to solve the inexorable tragedy of life by the power of love is distinctly Slavonic. They object to the assertion that Chaikovsky is eclectic as opposed to the nationalist school, and affirm that he is as thoroughly national as Glinka and Borodin, though he expresses another side of the national character. The judgment of the Germanic countries and of England seems to be more decisive on this point than that of his own countrymen. There, at any rate, Chaikovsky is recognised as a most distinctively Russian composer.

The "New Russian School" and Chaikovsky represent the immediate past. What of the present? The present is very rich and full of promise. The impulse to development given by the composers of the past generation is operating with great intensity. Russia has taken her place in the foremost ranks of musical progress. She is no longer a mere recipient of foreign influences. In music as in literature she is able to exert influence in her turn, and the unmistakable signs of her influence are visible in the work of modern French composers. Musical life in Russia is a flowing tide. The taste of the public is being gradually refined by first-class concerts. The Conservatoires of St. Petersburg and Moscow, the schools of the Russian Musical Society, and many other institutions have widely disseminated a knowledge of the theory and practice of music, and new training-schools are constantly being opened. The number of composers is steadily growing, and musical publishers issue an endless stream of new works, a surprisingly large proportion of which show vigour and originality. Many of the younger composers are boldly displaying fresh

The Musical Outlook.

musical resources, and the outlook of Russian music at the present moment seems exceedingly hopeful in every respect.

There are several living composers who form a link between the older and the newer schools. In St. Petersburg Alexander Konstantinovich Glazunóv and Anatoly Konstantinovich Liadov were both pupils and intimate associates of Rimsky-Korsakov. The former, who is now director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, wrote his first symphony in 1881 at the age of sixteen, and his early work secured for him from the musicians of the Rimsky-Korsakov group the nickname of "The Little Glinka." Glazunov has written eight symphonies, a number of symphonic poems and scenes, and several ballets, of which *Raymonda* is considered the best. There are many traces in his work of the influence of the national school, but he is not so distinctively Russian as his predecessors. He lacks profundity of psychological analysis, but his command of musical form and the strength and impressiveness of his symphonies give him a high rank among Russian composers, while his popularity is frequently attested in the concerts he conducts in St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Anatoly Liadov, a professor in the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, is the author of a number of pianoforte works and of some charming miniature symphonic poems, *Baba Yaga*, *The Magic Lake*, and *Kikimora*, in which the Russian element is very strong. Liadov is reproached by his friends for his dilatoriness in production, but what he does write is elaborately chiselled and polished to a nice degree of perfection.

The nationalist tradition which for some years suffered an eclipse has recently been revived with great success in the work of a talented young St. Petersburg composer, Igor Stravinsky, who in his fairy-tale ballet, *The Fire Bird*, has shown himself to be a direct successor of Rimsky-Korsakov, and in his *Petrushka* (Punch and Judy Show) has with rare vigour and colour given a musical presentation of the life of the street.

In Moscow the influence of the Rubinstein-Chaikovsky tradition lingers. Anton Arensky, who before his premature

death in 1906, was first a professor in the Moscow Conservatoire and later the leader of the choir of the Court Chapel, was a follower of Chaikovsky and displayed in his music no marked individuality of his own. A pupil of Chaikovsky's, Sergei Ivanovich Taneiev, exerted over the younger musicians in Moscow an influence comparable in degree with that exerted by Rimsky-Korsakov in St. Petersburg, but his work is devoid of any traces of the influence of Russian folk-music and lacks colour and charm.

Moscow a Musical Centre.

At the present moment Moscow is the scene of a very interesting and complex musical movement. There is a group of composers ranging in age from thirty to a little under fifty who have produced a great deal of work of high quality and of very varied interest. This group cannot be said to constitute a school. Its members profess no common musical creed, and it is only in virtue of what they are not that they can be placed under a single category. They are not nationalists in the sense in which the word was understood by the Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov school. And it is all to the good that they have freed themselves from the bonds of an obligatory nationalism, since nationalism is a source of inspiration only when it is original, real, and personal, when, as was the case with Borodin, Musorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov, the character of the composer is vitally connected with the elemental forces of the nation. Nationalism as a mode, a mere imitative nationalism is fatal to true art, as the numerous efforts of mediocrities have demonstrated to weariness.

The chief of the Moscow composers are Grechaninov, Rahmaninov, Vasilenko, Metner, and Skriabin. Grechaninov (born in 1874) has written a great deal of vocal and instrumental music that has attained considerable popularity, and his songs in particular, among which are adaptations of Scottish airs, set to versions of Burns' poems, are widely known. Grechaninov has also won distinction as a composer of ecclesiastical music.

Sergei Rahmaninov (born in 1873) studied at the Moscow Conservatoire under Taneiev and Arensky, and in a number of pianoforte pieces and orchestral works he has upheld with sobriety, earnestness, and power, added to a highly-developed technique, the Chaikovsky tradition. He is probably the most popular of living Russian composers.

Sergei Vasilenko (born in 1872), now professor of instrumentation and orchestration in the Moscow Conservatoire, is an original and interesting composer who has already passed through several phases of development from absorption in the religious mysticism of the Russian people, expressed in his *Legend of the City of Kitezh*, and his *Epic Poem*, to an eager assimilation of the influences of the latest school of Russian poetry culminating in the pantheistic optimism of his orchestral suite *Au Soleil*.

Nicholas Metner.

Nicholas Metner, a writer of pianoforte music and songs, stands wholly apart from other contemporary composers. He shows no trace of Russian influences and is severely classical in his forms. His work is impressive, for one thing, on account of its high technical finish, and it has aroused considerable discussion, some critics accusing the composer of coldness and lack of feeling, while others declare that his music, for all its severity of outline, affects them in that profound and inexpressible manner which is characteristic of the highest art. Metner is a pianist of great distinction, and in several concerts in St. Petersburg and Moscow he has given effective interpretations of his own work.

Skriabin.

By far the most interesting and most hotly-discussed of contemporary Russian composers is, however, Alexander Skriabin, who was born in 1871 and studied under Taneiev and Safonov in the Moscow Conservatoire. Skriabin has written over sixty orchestral and pianoforte works which, taken together, form a remarkable record of a passionate search for new musical forms to express the finest shades of blended religious

and artistic emotion. The strangeness of Skriabin's work repels the many, while it has attracted to him a small band of ardent and devoted admirers. And the many admit the haunting, elusive beauty of much of his work even while the novelty of its forms irritates and baffles them and arouses the most violent controversy. It is to Skriabin's advantage that the upheaval of the last few years has largely broken down that rigid conservatism in matters of art which made the general public on principle hostile to innovations in painting, literature, and music. The most ordinary man has experienced during this period of political and social unrest a range of emotions of which under normal conditions he would never have imagined himself capable, and he is therefore disposed to be more tolerant than formerly to the expression of emotion transcending his own experience in forms to which he is not accustomed.

Skriabin was profoundly influenced by Chopin and Liszt, and also by Wagner. His admirers, indeed, place Skriabin and Wagner on a pinnacle apart as the only two musicians for whom life, musical creation, and religion constitute an inseparable whole. Art as religion and religion as something involving the conception of art, this, so these admirers declare, is the fundamental idea of Skriabin's work, and his compositions are a succession of attempts to express this idea in forms which grew in power and impressiveness in the measure that the author's perception of the idea became clearer and more profound. He is more than a musician. He aims at reuniting the arts which, originally blended in one whole in the celebration of ancient religious rites, have separated, each taking its own separate course of development, elaborating details, working out its own perfection, and are now ripe for a fresh synthesis, as Wagner foresaw. For Skriabin all art is a mystical form of activity aiming at causing that ecstasy which means the attainment of the full light of knowledge on the highest planes of nature. His first symphony, as his interpreter Leonid Sabaneiev points out, is a hymn to

ALEXANDER SKRIABIN

art as religion, his third symphony, *The Divine Poem*, expresses the liberation of the spirit from fetters, the self-affirmation of personality, and his *Poem of Ecstasy*, the joy of untrammelled action, the creative ecstasy. This creative ecstasy arises from the artist's realisation that he himself fashions the life of his spirit, and that in incessant, creative play, in unending movement towards attainment unattained, the spirit lives.

In *Prometheus, the Poem of Fire*, an astonishing symphony of ecstatic creative energy, Skriabin has reached for the present the highest point of his development, but he is understood to be engaged on the composition of a Mystery in which his religious ideas shall find their most complete expression.

This is not the place to enter upon a detailed examination of Skriabin's work, but enough has been said to indicate the wholly novel character, the extraordinary boldness of his musical conceptions. To give adequate musical expression to such a far-reaching philosophy obviously demands a fertility of resource that only a very exceptional composer can have at his command. What makes Skriabin so interesting is that his philosophy is not a mere product of reflection. It has been developed in perpetual association with its musical expression. It has been thought out in music. But the effort to think out such thought in music has led to a series of interesting discoveries, to an opening of new ways in composition, to the evolution of new harmonies, which are believed to arouse a peculiarly mystical vibration. All this leads to a greatly increased complexity of musical technique, and seems, in the opinion of Skriabin's interpreter, to foreshadow a revolution leading to the supersession of the scale at present in use by one much more finely subdivided and far more capable of expressing the faintest nuances of spiritual emotion.

In his *Prometheus* Skriabin has taken a step towards the reunion of the arts by availing himself of his sensations of a definite correspondence between sounds and colours, and associating with his musical symphony a symphony of colours.

So far, however, the technical means for producing the symphony of colours in the concert-hall have not been discovered, and all that is known of it is derived from the reports of enthusiastic friends who have experienced the combined effects of the parallel symphonies in the privacy of the composer's own rooms. The production of the musical symphony, *Prometheus*, in Russia and abroad has had the result of greatly perplexing both critics and public, but there is a strong disposition to admit that, in spite of an obvious lack of unity, the work is very possibly that of a genius opening up a world unknown. All Skriabin's admirers are eagerly looking forward to the completion of that *Mystery*, in which the suggestions contained in his earlier works shall blossom out into fullest expression.

It remains to give some account of the various aspects of everyday musical life in Russia at the present moment.

Musical Instruction.

Musical education is still largely the monopoly of the official Conservatoires in St. Petersburg and Moscow, in respect of which the musical schools of the Russian Musical Society in a large number of towns stand as secondary schools to the Universities. When the St. Petersburg Conservatoire was founded, over fifty years, ago its objects were hardly understood. A lady who wished to enter her daughter as a pupil expressed to Anton Rubinstein the hope that special care would be taken that pupils should keep up their knowledge of foreign languages, and was amazed to hear that the language of instruction would be Russian. But though Russian was the language of instruction the spirit that governed the Conservatoire was for a long time German. This institution was, in fact, the stronghold of those German tendencies in music against which Balákirev and his associates carried on such a vigorous campaign. The German spirit added to the official and academic spirit made the Conservatoire at one period the bugbear of the progressive composers, but in the end, in spite of a hundred obvious drawbacks, both the Moscow and St.

Petersburg Conservatoires have by the work they have done powerfully vindicated their right to exist. They have made obligatory upon all composers a certain very high standard of musical training, and the fact that for many years Rimsky-Korsakov was the leading spirit of the St. Petersburg institution and Chaikovsky of the sister institution in Moscow would be alone sufficient to rebut the accusation that Conservatoires impede development. It is true that the professorial spirit deadens and revolt quickens, but after all without the professional spirit revolt itself would beat the air and progress would lack buoyancy. It is an admirable feature of the Russian Conservatoires that they not only impart a musical training but try to give their students an all-round education.

A free Popular Conservatoire, the object of which is to disseminate musical knowledge amongst wider circles than those reached by the official conservatoires, and to avoid the disadvantages of official routine, has been established in Moscow by private enterprise and has been in the best sense successful. It is not wealthy. It has no building of its own, and its lecturers hold their classes in various hired rooms, in private houses, or in schools, but it has awakened an eager interest in musical theory among many busy people, including working men, who are unable to take the regular courses in the old-established institutions.

The Free Musical School in St. Petersburg founded by Balákirev in opposition to the Conservatoire, and once famous for the excellence of its concerts still exists, but has lost its importance. In the capitals and the provincial towns there is naturally a large number of private musical schools.

Concert-giving.

The capitals are well off for concerts. The traditional symphony concerts of the Russian Musical Society have become lifeless and uninteresting, but at the subscription concerts, organised by prominent conductors and musicians, a very wide selection of the best classical and modern music, including many new works

by Russian composers, is performed every winter by first-class orchestras assisted by various executive artists of European fame. And the singers and the violin and piano virtuosos who come to Russia every year in large numbers nowhere attract such crowded and enthusiastic houses as in St. Petersburg and Moscow, in spite of the expensiveness of tickets. The ovations in a Russian concert-hall are a sight to see. When the programme has been played or sung through, encores given, and the more sober part of the audience is gradually dispersing, the enthusiasts, mostly young in years, press forward towards the stage and by their whole-hearted applause create such a liberating atmosphere of triumph that the artist is involuntarily infected and plays on and on for sheer joy of unrestrained playing. Very often this informal termination is the best part of the concert. Concerts are constantly given in provincial towns and are everywhere largely attended. One misses in Russia the open-air brass band or orchestral concerts that are the rule in Germany, but during the summer months orchestral concerts are held at the Pavlovsk Station in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg, and at the various health resorts. Military bands are not utilised to anything like the extent they might be for enlivening the few public squares and gardens the capitals possess.

The Opera.

The opera is cultivated chiefly in the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg and Moscow, which, owing to their great resources, are in a position to produce operas very effectively. A great variety of works is staged, from *The Huguenots* to Wagner and the latest works of the Russian school. Unfortunately the Imperial Opera Houses are not very accessible to the general public, for one thing because of the high prices charged, and for another because the subscription system has created a kind of close corporation, the members of which renew their subscriptions from year to year and leave their tickets to their heirs in their wills. The number of first-class singers

engaged in the Imperial Opera is much smaller than might be expected. There are, in fact, only two, the bass Shaliápin, and the tenor Sobinov. Among the women artists there are none who can be placed on a level with these two. Feodor Shaliápin was born in 1873, and is the son of a peasant in the Viatka government, was a choir-boy in his boyhood, then sang in the chorus of a provincial opera troupe in Ufa, and at the age of seventeen made his début as a soloist. He roved over Russia with a Little Russian troupe, found in Tiflis a benefactor who gave him some regular lessons in singing, and then made his way to Moscow and finally to St. Petersburg. In Mamontov's Opera House in Moscow he secured triumphs in performances of a number of operas of the Russian school, and these triumphs were repeated in St. Petersburg, and later in La Scala in Milan, and in America. Shaliápin has a voice of marvellous power and timbre, which of recent years has unfortunately shown signs of wear and tear, a striking presence—he is considerably over six feet high—and he is an actor of such remarkable skill and resource that it is safe to assert that he would meet with equal success on the dramatic stage. For the present he is the idol of the concert-going and opera-loving public throughout Russia. Leonid Sóbinov has a clear bell-like tenor, and is at his best in the part of Lensky in *Eugen Onegin*.

In the Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg and Moscow two evenings a week during the season are devoted to the ballet, a form of entertainment the popularity of which in Russia has only during the last few years become intelligible in England, thanks to the performances of Russian dancers in London. At a time when the ballet had become obsolete in Europe it was artificially maintained in Russia, and the best traditions of the earlier period of ballet-dancing were guarded at the Imperial expense during a period when the great proportion of the Russian public remained entirely indifferent to the art. In the 'nineties of the last century the ballet attracted the attention of leading musicians and artists, the

possibilities of expression contained in ballet-dancing were discussed, and some of the best musicians, including Chaikovsky and Glazunov, composed ballet music while many talented painters were engaged as decorators. The new conception of dancing as an art, or rather the revival of classical conceptions in the person of Isidora Duncan, whose performances are highly appreciated in St. Petersburg, exercised a marked influence on the Imperial Ballet, and now the routine of that ancient tradition which Marius Petitpas upheld for so many years with such firmness and dignity has given place, under the enthusiastic guidance of M. Fokin, to an eager effort to test all the resources of expression contained in bodily movement associated with music. Such systems of training in rhythmical gymnastics as that of Jaques Dalcroze have also had an influence. The element of acrobatics in the ballet is being thrust into the background by the growing tendency to emphasise rhythmical expressiveness, just as the florid arias of Italian opera are being superseded by music adjusted to the necessities of expression and not subordinated to the display of technique. The revival of interest in the ballet in Western Europe has stimulated the revival in Russia, and Russians have begun to look on such dancers as Pavlova and Nizhinsky with new and wondering eyes.

The operatic demands of a broader public in St. Petersburg are provided for in the People's Palace of the Emperor Nicholas II, where operatic and dramatic performances of very fair quality are given at exceedingly moderate prices. An entrance fee of twopence-halfpenny gives visitors the right to wander over the grounds, to look at side-shows, and to stand in the large hall in which the chief performances are given. A few pence extra gives the right to a seat, and a seat in the front row of the stalls does not cost more than two or three shillings on ordinary occasions. The People's Palace is frequented, especially on Sundays and holidays, by crowds of working people, artisans, and soldiers who are given the opportunity of becoming acquainted with a great

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variety of standard operas both Russian and foreign. In connection with the People's Palace an immense theatre, capable of seating three thousand persons, has recently been erected, and the performances given here are of a better quality and the price of tickets higher than in the older hall.

The musical development of Russia is more than keeping pace with the general development of the country. It is strongly affected, it is true, by prevailing political and social forces, and the literary tendencies of the moment are very clearly and faithfully reflected in music. The nationalist movement in music ran parallel with the populist movement in literature, and a similar movement in painting, and the modernist movement in literature and in painting is closely associated with certain recent tendencies in music. But music from its very nature is freer than the other arts, is not subject in the same degree as they are to the social conditions prevailing at a given moment. The increasing popularisation of music goes hand in hand with economic progress, but popularisation does not dictate the line of development which music is to take. It only multiplies indefinitely the opportunities for the display of that free creative faculty which has been exercised with such striking effect during the last fifty years of comparatively limited opportunity. And from this point of view the prospects of musical development in this immense Empire are hopeful in the highest degree. It is no wonder that while on the one hand composers like Skriabin are refining to the utmost the means of musical expression, there are others who dream of the coming of a great national art in which the whole people shall be actively participant, and the crown and pinnacle of which shall be a perfected music.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THEATRE

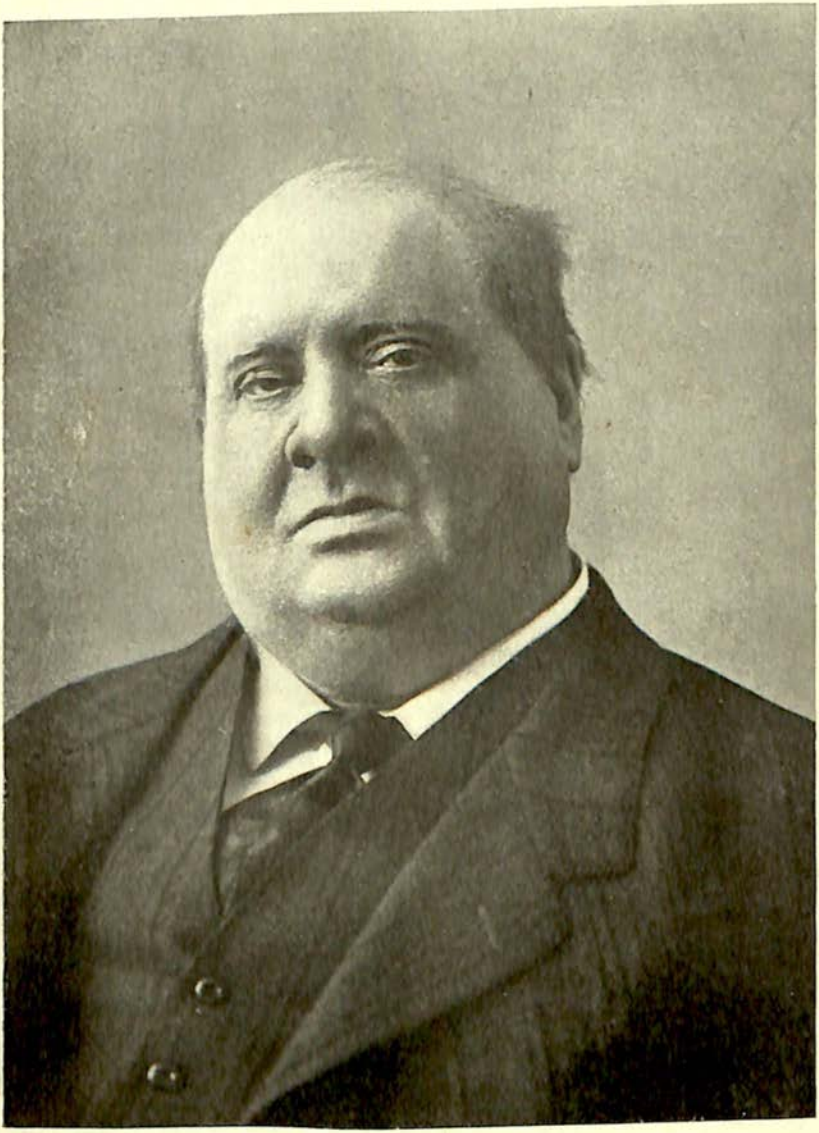
THE Russian theatre represents various forms of the Western theatre with something of its own besides. The conventional theatre and the progressive theatre, crude melodrama and the finest symbolism are all here. There is dull aping of Western fashions, and there is also an extraordinary acute sense of the theatre as a problem. The problem is stated and faced with characteristic Russian frankness and thoroughness. The remotest possibilities of dramatic art are taken into consideration, including the possibility that the theatre in its present form may have outlived its time and should be superseded. Western plays and players quickly find their way to Russia and, indeed, translated plays constitute the bulk of the Russian theatrical répertoire. All kinds of Western innovations are eagerly discussed and readily adopted, and at the same time in various odd corners in the capitals stale and obsolete theatrical forms stubbornly hold their own. Both the best and the worst sides of the theatre are to be found in Russia. The dullness and shallowness of theatrical routine are most obviously and oppressingly dull and shallow. But over against this is the openness of mind, the keenness of intelligence, the energy and persistence in inquiry and experiment that place the Russian theatre in the vanguard of the modern theatrical movement. And the progressive spirit is steadily gaining ground; theatrical conventionalism is losing its self-confidence, is beginning to doubt of itself. There are no fixed new standards, except that things must be done as well and intelligently as possible, and the old standards are drifting into oblivion. On the whole the Russian theatre is at present a puzzling institution, often delightful, often disappointing, with flashes of brilliant

The Theatre.

promise, with moments of unalloyed, aesthetic pleasure, with a great deal of fragmentary and unsatisfactory experimenting, and with outbursts of passionate utterance alternating with long spells of the silence of exhaustion during which a slovenly conventionalism holds sway. The Russians as a people are both unusually impulsive and unusually intelligent and critical. They are capable of blind enthusiasm for the theatre, but in moments of self-criticism they are ready to trample on their own enthusiasm and to insist on radical changes. When the change is effected there is fresh enthusiasm for the innovation, then fresh criticism, and so the theatre moves from phase to phase. Or else the spectator grows weary of the perpetual emotional and intellectual exercise and settles either into complete indifference to the theatre or to placid acceptance of convention. Certain limited groups who are seriously and intensely interested in the drama, like the group associated with the Moscow Art Theatre, hold the balance and ensure a certain steadiness of theatrical development.

Like most other things in Russia the theatre is centralised. Moscow and St. Petersburg take the lead and the Russian theatres in provincial towns follow at a great distance. In towns with a non-Russian population like Riga, Reval, Dorpat, Warsaw, Vilna, Tiflis, Baku, and Kazan, there are German, Lettish, Esthonian, Polish, Lithuanian, Jewish, Georgian, Armenian, and Tartar theatres, that take independent lines of development, and there are Little-Russian companies with their centre in Kiev that enjoy considerable success even in the Great Russian cities. But in the Russian provincial towns generally there are no manifestations of independent theatrical initiative like the répertoire theatres in English provincial towns or the Meiningen troupe in Germany. When the season is over in the capitals the city companies tour the provinces, and for the rest of the year second or third-rate provincial companies fill the boards with a considerable show of success.

In the capitals it is the State theatres, the Alexandra Theatre in St. Petersburg, and the Maly Teatr (Little Theatre) in Moscow, that occupy the central position as institutions. They are commodious, well-endowed, are less dependent than private enterprises on the whims of the public, and possess those sanctions of time, custom, and inertia which ensure an air of general well-being and make for continual prosperity. There is a pleasant sense of antiquity about them. Both the Alexandra Theatre and the Maly Teatr are reminiscent of the early years of the last century, of the brilliant dawn of Russian literature, of Pushkin and his brother poets, and of the critic Bielinsky, whose delight in the theatre was unbounded. The past glories of the Russian theatre, the traditional triumphs, the echoes of famous names like Semenova, Asenkova and Streptova, Karatygin and Shchepkin—the Russian Mrs. Siddonses and Garricks—are all associated with the Imperial theatres. Such traditions have a certain binding force. The Imperial theatres may sink into sleepy routine, but they cannot wholly forget their past achievements, their accumulated wealth of experience, their technique. Moreover, time has established between these theatres and the public a certain mutual understanding. The public knows what to expect and the theatres know what the public wants. There is a sort of fundamental good-humour in the State companies, an unaffected pleasure in the theatre as it is, in playing for its own sake, on a traditional stage, with the conventional applause, bows, bouquets, suppers, newspaper criticism, and all the rest of it. This good-humour born of use, familiarity, security, and the prospect of a pension, combined with sheer pleasure in acting, communicates itself to the public. Varlamov and Davydov, two immensely stout old comic actors, walk out on to the stage of the Alexandra Theatre and the audience at once prepares to roar, as it has roared a hundred times before. Varlamov raises an eyebrow and out breaks a storm of uncontrollable laughter. Madame Savina plays a widow's part, and the



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audience watches her with an affectionate interest in which there is little room for criticism. It is the part she is bound by usage and right to play. She has become a part of the tradition and the memory of the older spectators drifts back to the time when she made her appearance as a promising debutante in a play of Turgeniev's, to the great delight of the author himself when in the late seventies he returned from abroad to St. Petersburg to bask for a little while in the sunlight of his own established fame.

In a word, the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg or in Moscow is an institution and draws from this fact its strength and its pride. It has established for itself a certain standard of efficiency, and has schools in which pupils are trained up to this standard. There is a complete apparatus, there are well-tried methods of producing actors and actresses. The whole system of drill has been well worked out. Members of the Imperial troupe are well paid and well cared for and within the limits established by tradition there is considerable room for the display of histrionic talent. But these limits are definite, and the Imperial theatres would not be institutions if there were not very definite limitations. The very weight and dignity of tradition is unfavourable to experiment. The principle that only the attained is the attainable, and that limited achievement is better than high purpose unfulfilled has broad scope here. And the result is at once satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The plays the theatre feels it can produce it produces with great facility and efficiency. The artists play well together. Every actor knows his part, and knows to a nicety the acoustic properties of the building. The play goes with swing and verve. There are no sudden halts, no jars, no awkward pauses. The audience laughs at the right places, is worked up to the proper state of anticipation by the rapid movement of the drama, is appropriately moved to tears, and goes away with a pleasant feeling that an emotional circle has been completed.

This happens usually when the Imperial Theatre produces

one of Ostrovsky's plays. Some of the critics are now saying that the Alexandra Theatre does not know how to stage Ostrovsky. Perhaps they are right. But then hardly any other theatres produce Ostrovsky frequently, and none of them make a speciality of his work as do the official theatres. One is more or less compelled to judge Ostrovsky by the Imperial stage and the latter by Ostrovsky. This author, who flourished in the sixties and was a friend of Turgeniev, and the other famous novelists of the time, is the one Russian playwright pure and simple. Most writers have made experiments in the drama, some of them very successful experiments. Ostrovsky alone made the writing of dramas his vocation. He was of merchant origin, and the subjects of his plays are drawn mainly from the life of the merchant class. This circumstance was a very fortunate one for the Russian stage. The merchant class is bluff, hearty, and original, possesses a wealth of curious customs and odd sayings and, what is most important from a scenic point of view, presents in an unusually vivid and concrete form the relations between character and environment, the play of impulse within the limits of very stubborn convention. Merchant life in Russia fifty years ago presented the broad features, the sharp outlines, the clearly marked situations that make plays effective on the stage and Ostrovsky had a very keen sense of the spectacular side of things. This life is again sufficiently unfamiliar to be picturesque and yet not so remote as to be unintelligible. A great many of Ostrovsky's plays are full of a rippling and genuine humour, not in the least forced, as is most of the Russian literary humour of to-day, but as spontaneous and natural as the proverbs and quaint turns of speech which sparkle in the author's dialogue.

Ostrovsky.

Ostrovsky did not confine himself to the homes of the merchants. In the seven volumes of his published works there are many dramas that deal with the life of the gentry. Only it is not the polished and Westernised gentry of the

towns that he describes, but the old-fashioned landed proprietors who retained customs as characteristic and as full of colour as those of the merchants. All Ostrovsky's plays are described as realistic, which means simply that the scenes are taken from real life and that a certain photographic accuracy is observed in the presentation of visible objects. In any case realism is a convenient term with which to designate the kind of drama against which the symbolists have been revolting of late years. But the realism of Ostrovsky's work is not so obvious and insistent now that the scenes he describes have been removed by time to an almost romantic distance, while the powerful dramatic element remains sharp and clear. A great deal depends upon the production which may be stubbornly realistic or tinged with romanticism. The Imperial theatres prefer a realism that is not quite real, but conventional, a kind of rough, common-sense realism that gives little play to the fancy or the intellect but serves very well as a framework for average histrionic ability and for conventional forms of acting. In such a presentation Ostrovsky is effective. His liveliness, his oddities, his delight in idiomatic repartee are strongly emphasised. A sanguine temperament prevails in the Imperial Troupe, and when it produces such comedies as *The Busy Corner*, or *Every Wise Man has his Follies*, it does so with great gusto. Ostrovsky is probably much bigger and less conventional than he is made to appear on the official stage, but the first impression is one of unusual harmony between author and actors. It is true that the decorations lack distinction and point clearly to a period of art or rather want of art that is now happily passing away in Russia. But this might have seemed a minor matter as far as Ostrovsky was concerned, if new and higher standards of decorative art had not been set up by private theatres, and if the management of the Imperial theatres itself had not in a number of productions made vigorous efforts to overtake the times.

For during the last few years the Russian theatre has

undergone a transformation. The taste of the public is changing and the methods that are still dominant in the Imperial theatres are beginning to pall. Fortunately the spirit of reform is at work on the official stage. The management now includes men of culture and energy who are doing their best to counteract the inertia of tradition and to use the abundant material resources of the Imperial theatres as a means of testing the possibilities of new resources in dramatic art. So far the opera houses have benefited from this new tendency more than the dramatic theatres. The Imperial opera houses, in fact, took the lead in that new movement which by attracting the most talented artists to the work of designing theatrical decorations has led during the last few years to such dazzling effects. The dramatic theatres lag far behind, but they too are progressing. The Alexandra Theatre now has an up-to-date stage manager in the person of M. Vsevelod Meierhold, who actively participated a few years ago in the modernist revolt. Various opinions may be held as to the exact artistic value of many of M. Meierhold's productions, but one thing is perfectly clear. He is the enemy of dead routine. He will have nothing to do with the old way of simply varying on traditional methods. He thinks out his productions down to the minutest detail and experiments with a genuine passion for perfection. Moreover he is alive to modern problems, is versed in the most recent movements in painting and literature as well as in the drama. In a word, he takes a prominent place among those reformers who insist on the subjection of the theatre to the standards of true art. But one stage manager, even when he is supported by a number of broad-minded men like Baron Driesen, the editor of the Annual of the Imperial theatres which has been published since 1909, and leading actors like M. Hodotov, cannot effect radical changes. The troupe is attached to the old methods and does not adapt itself readily to the new. Changes are only gradually making their way, and except on rare occasions

Modern Dramatic Taste.

the Imperial theatres are rather dull places for those who have acquired a taste for modern drama.

It is a noteworthy sign of change that the répertoire of these theatres has recently been considerably extended. Ostrovsky's dramas, together with translations of carefully chosen French and German plays, formerly had a monopoly of the official stage. Mr. Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* was produced a few years ago, but had very slight success, the general verdict being that the problems it dealt with were exclusively English and were uninteresting for Russia. Modern Russian authors of note were coldly treated by the Imperial theatres. Chehov's play, *The Seagull*, was produced in the Alexandra Theatre in 1896, but the troupe, with the exception of Madame Kommisarzhevskaia and M. Davydov, displayed such an absolute incapacity to enter into the spirit of the play that the production was a complete failure and Chehov fled from St. Petersburg in despair. In the season 1912–13, however, the works of modern authors were staged with considerable success. A play by Sologub, *Hostages of Life*, a work of inferior value giving evidence of the decline of the author's remarkable powers was generously treated by the management and admirably staged. Sologub's earlier and better dramas were played in the Kommisarzhevskaia Theatre at a time when they were banned on the official stage, and the present apparent victory of symbolism in the Imperial Theatre is no real victory. The staging of a play of Andreiev's, *Professor Starytsin*, marked a very definite break with the old tradition of academic exclusiveness.

The Imperial theatres can still point with pride to their veterans Davydov and Varlamov in St. Petersburg, and the actresses Ermolova and Fedotova in Moscow. None of the younger actors on the Imperial stage can be compared with these. There was one brilliant actress, Vera Kommisarzhevskaia, who made her appearance in the Alexandra Theatre in the later nineties, but the prevailing routine, the heavy formalism oppressed her, and in the midst of her triumphs

she left the official stage to become one of the leaders of a new movement. This movement, which is of the greatest importance for the Russian stage, and the effects of which have been felt in Western Europe, is associated in St. Petersburg with Kommisarzhevskaia's name, and in Moscow has as its centre the Art Theatre of Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko.

Vera Kommisarzhevskaia, who died in February, 1910, at the age of forty-five, had a courageous and tragic career.

Vera Kommisarzhevskaia.

She was the one actress of deep and original power who has appeared in Russia in the present generation, but her talent was of the restlessly searching kind that refuses to be bound down by conventional methods and is constantly endeavouring to find some absolutely perfect means of expressing an ideal. She was a remarkable actress, even from the conventional point of view. Her diction and her mimicry were admirable, and her whole manner of impersonation was full of grace and charm. But even more impressive was her unceasing effort to conquer for her art some spiritual sphere hitherto unattained. She had in her the perpetual longing, the strange religious craving that possessed the great Russian writers. She was an unconquerable idealist and, loving her art passionately as she did, she denied it in the end for the sake of an ideal. She chose thorny paths and met with failure after failure, yet, though death came on her suddenly before she could see a gleam of success the influence of her personality is through the very strength of her aspiration incomparably more powerful than any influence that could have been secured to her by conventional triumphs on the stage.

Vera Kommisarzhevskaia was the daughter of a singer, and in her childhood displayed remarkable dramatic gifts. But it was only in her twenty-third year, after an unfortunate marriage, that she began to study for the stage under Davydov of the Alexandra Theatre. After successful appearances in provincial theatres, more especially in Vilna, she accepted a

position in the Alexandra Theatre where she very soon became a popular favourite. In Ostrovsky's plays, *The Wild Girl*, and *The Bride without a Dowry*, and as Gretchen in *Faust*, she startled and delighted the St. Petersburg public by her careful and original interpretations of familiar parts. If she had remained in the Alexandra Theatre she might have looked forward to securing in time a position amongst the serene and honoured veterans. But the very conception of such a career was repugnant to her, and in the ponderous mechanism of the Imperial stage she found nothing to correspond to her artistic ideals. In 1902 she gave up her position and set to work independently. A series of brilliantly successful tours in the provinces provided her with the funds with which to open a theatre of her own in the Passage in St. Petersburg. The two years (1904–06) in the Passage Theatre were a transitional period in Vera Kommisarzhevskaia's career. She still played the parts in Ostrovsky's plays which she had long since mentally outgrown, but in addition she produced Ibsen's *The Master Builder* and *The Dolls' House*, giving in the latter play a most charmingly capricious Nora, plays by the Austrian authors Schnitzler and Hermann Bahr, and two plays by Gorky, *In Summer Villas* and *The Children of the Sun*. The Passage Theatre was a very good private theatre and Kommisarzhevskaia played well in it, but it was not by any means the ideal theatre of which she dreamed. It practically amounted to an attempt to be modern to the degree in which an average German theatre is modern, and also to do justice to contemporary Russian authors. It was a theatre of compromise.

In 1906 Kommisarzhevskaia took a further step forward. She rented a theatre in the Offitserskaia Street in St. Petersburg, and here she began a series of deliberate experiments, sparing no time, money, or labour in the effort to establish an ideal theatre. No artistic enterprise in St. Petersburg in recent years has aroused keener interest or more violent discussion than this little theatre with the white columns on

the Offitserskaia. It was opened during a period of social and political excitement, at the moment of a sudden revival of interest in questions of art. And the new theatre at once associated itself closely with the latest movements in art and literature. The younger painters and poets flocked around it. Its first nights were among the most important events in the artistic world. Those were the days when it seemed as though new horizons were opening up for all forms of art, when everything seemed possible.

In her effort to perfect a symbolical drama Kommisarzhevskaia was aided at first by M. Meierhold as stage-manager. The methods of the new theatre were violently attacked by most of the critics. Acting, staging, and decoration were all condemned. It was complained that the actors were made subject to a rigid scheme, that they were deprived of their individuality, and that the stage-manager exercised a tyrannical authority. These complaints were not wholly unjustified. The plays produced at the new theatre often resembled a series of conventionalised living pictures in which the postures of the players were most skilfully combined with quaint and suggestive backgrounds. The dialogue was reduced to a secondary position, it was made colourless, the players were compelled to speak their parts in a strained, monotonous voice which was a mere echo of their normal utterance; all the spoken element in the drama became, in fact, a mere undertone of the changing moods which were more vividly expressed by the striking combinations of colour devised by talented young artists in costumes and scenery, and by the sharply-outlined gestures and groupings to which M. Meierhold attributed such importance. This method proved very successful in two productions. In Alexander Blok's pretty *Pulcinello* it was in entire harmony with the spirit of the play which is a Punch and Judy show turned into dreamy allegory. In Maeterlinck's *Sister Beatrice* again the method was so applied as to maintain that atmosphere of half-utterance, of pregnant silences that is so characteristic of Maeterlinck,

VERA KOMMISSARZHEVSKAIA

while enabling Madame Kommisarzhevskaia to reveal to the full her faculty for the finer forms of spiritual expression. But in other productions the method had an oppressive effect, and in the staging of Maeterlinck's *Pelleas and Melisande* the players were so hemmed in, so completely stifled by the excessive narrowing of the stage and the elaborateness of the scenery that Madame Kommisarzhevskaia decided that the path chosen was a false one. M. Meierhold, she saw, was doing his best to reduce the stage with its living actors to a theatre of marionettes, was, in fact, trying to realise with the existing material the ideal of Mr. Gordon Craig. She had other views and accordingly parted with M. Meierhold.

During the following years there was a series of difficulties and failures. Kommisarzhevskaia could find no real and permanent helpers. She staged a number of plays with the help of her brother and of M. Evreinov; sometimes the productions were successful, sometimes they were not, but the theatre, in spite of the interest it aroused, was never materially prosperous. A badly managed trip to New York did not improve the financial position, and a final effort to retrieve matters led to catastrophe. Oscar Wilde's *Salome* was put into rehearsal, and M. Evreinov's management and the glowing and dazzling scenery of M. Kalmakov led to results that seemed to promise certain triumph. The play was licensed, the bills were out, the tickets were sold, when suddenly deputies of the Right in the Duma and priests raised a protest against the performance, declaring the play to be blasphemous. A large number of politicians attended the grand rehearsal. The production in its amazing combination of light and colour effects was something unprecedented in St. Petersburg, but even the Assistant-Prefect who was present saw no reason to prohibit the play. It was forbidden, however, on the following day, just before the performance. The prohibition proved ruinous to the theatre for the preparations for *Salome* had involved an enormous outlay. Shortly

afterwards the enterprise was wound up and Madame Kommisarzhevskaia and part of her company went on a tour in the provinces. The tour was financially successful, but the experience on the Offitserskaia made a deep impression on Vera Kommisarzhevskaia. She had been practically alone throughout. She had no real and constant helpers. Her troupe, which like all troupes was composed of players, good, bad, and indifferent, only vaguely understood her aims. Her successes had been fragmentary. She had been dogged by a failure that seemed to her to be implicit in the theatre itself as at present constituted. Reflecting on her experience she came to a radical decision. She resolved to abandon the stage entirely. "I am leaving," she wrote to her troupe, "because the theatre in the form in which it now exists no longer seems to me necessary, and the way I have taken in the search for new forms no longer seems to me the true way." In another very characteristic letter she explains her determination to open a school. "I have arrived at a great decision," she writes, "and, obedient always to the bidding of the artist that is in me, I gladly submit to this decision. I am going to open a school, but this will not be simply a school. It will be a place in which people, young people with hearts and souls, will learn to understand and love the truly beautiful and to come to God. This is such an immense task that I only venture to undertake it because I feel with my whole being that this is God's will, that this is my true mission in life, and that it is for this that something has been given me which draws to me the hearts of the young. It is for this that my spirit has been kept young and joyful until now, for this end I have been brought through all trials, it is for this that faith in myself through God has been strengthened and confirmed in me." The school was never opened. In Tashkend in Central Asia, when the tour was drawing to a close, Vera Kommisarzhevskaia caught small-pox in the bazaars and died within a few days. Her body was brought to St. Petersburg and buried in the cemetery attached to the

Alexander Nevsky Monastery. The funeral, which was attended by thousands, was a demonstration of popular affection such as has never been seen at the funeral of any actor or actress in Russia.

The abandonment of the stage by the most talented of modern Russian actresses was not an accident, nor was it the outcome of pettishness or chagrin. It was simply the frank and deliberate admission by the most highly sensitive of all persons connected with the stage that the theatre must be something fundamentally different from what it now is if it is to serve the purpose of true artistic expression. Eleanora Duse once said, "To save the theatre the theatre must be destroyed, the actors and actresses must all die of the plague. They make art impossible." In Russia actions follow on words much more readily than in other parts of the world. Kommisarzhevskaia's refusal was one of the symptoms of a general crisis in the theatre.

But her work has had a very distinct effect upon the theatre as it now is. The public that takes a real interest in the drama has been made to reflect deeply, and will no longer tolerate the slovenly methods that a few years ago so easily passed muster. Dramatic critics, too, have learned something, and, as custom has it, those who bitterly attacked Kommisarzhevskaia during her lifetime are loud in their praise of her now that she is dead. The Imperial theatres have reaped some of the benefit. M. Meierhold is now stage-manager in the Imperial theatres of St. Petersburg. Bravich, the leading actor in Kommisarzhevskaia's troupe, secured an engagement in the Maly Theatre in Moscow. The higher standard of stage decoration now established is largely due to the bold initiative of the theatre on the Offitserskaia. Vera Kommisarzhevskaia was not the sole agent in the change, but no one has stated the necessity of change so forcibly as she. And in spite of the great improvements effected the fundamental questions she put as to the artistic value of the theatre still remain unanswered.

The Moscow Art Theatre works within the limits of the attainable, and within these limits has achieved results that make this theatre in the opinion of competent observers absolutely the best in Europe. It stands wholly apart from the rest of the Russian theatrical world. It is privately financed. It trains its own actors and actresses, has built in Moscow a theatre specially adapted to its own requirements; in a word it has the poise and steadiness which come from a complete dependence on its own resources and from a sense of solid achievement. The founders and leading spirits of the theatre are MM. Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko. The latter is the manager; the former is the principal actor, the teacher, the inspirer, and the theatre is frequently spoken of under his name. Stanislavsky is a pseudonym. Its bearer is a member of a well-known family of manufacturers in Moscow, the Alekseievs, and his brother was at one time mayor of the city. His grandmother was a French actress, and he inherited her passion for the stage. In his early youth he played in a private theatre in his father's house, sang in opera, studied in the Paris Conservatoire, was strongly influenced by the Meiningen company and associated in Moscow with the most progressive actors and critics. Being a man of alert intelligence and very versatile talent he formed very pronounced and original views on the aims and methods of dramatic art, and in 1908, at a time when the older theatres were clearly demonstrating their hopeless inadequacy and inefficiency, he founded in connection with Nemirovich-Danchenko the Art Theatre. Fifteen years of unremitting work have made of this theatre an "institution" of which Russians are rightly proud. The aim is sufficiently indicated in the title. Dramatic production as an art in the strictest sense of the word is what this theatre, with rare consistency, holds in view. Stanislavsky has described scenic art in the sense in which it is cultivated in the Moscow theatre as "An artistic unfolding of the life of the human spirit." The phrase is not

Moscow Art Theatre.

particularly illuminating and may obviously be used of any of the arts, but the fact that Stanislavsky applies it to the stage at least indicates the intellectual purpose of his enterprise.

Given intentness of aim there is room for considerable catholicity of method, and the promoters of the Moscow theatre have been very open-minded in this respect. If Kommisarzhevskaia's theatre was a theatre of revolt, of revolt amongst other things against certain tendencies in the older enterprise in Moscow, Stanislavsky's theatre may be described as a theatre of reform. The idea was that brains must be put into the work of the stage. Everything that was done on the old stage may be done on the new, only it must be done infinitely better and a great deal must be done in addition. The stage must reveal man to the modern man. There is realism in the Moscow theatre, in fact it has been reproached with an excessive cultivation of realism. In its productions minute attention is paid to details, and with this object an extraordinary wealth of resource and, indeed, erudition are displayed in the elaboration of various aspects of scenery and acting. The striving after faithfulness to real life is pronounced, but if the result attained is one of genuine beauty with a direct appeal—and in the productions of the Moscow theatre such a result is usually secured—the method adopted is of secondary importance. Sometimes one might wish that the machinery were less ponderous, the evidence of design less apparent. Ibsen's *Brand*, for instance, as staged by the Art Theatre is a very finished production. The appeal is made by means of a number of stage effects that are in their totality beautiful, but the impression is marred by a certain sense of strain and over-elaboration. A few years ago the Theatre produced the principal scenes and dialogues from Dostoievsky's great novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*. Scenery and costumes were very simple. A great many passages from the novel which served as connecting links were simply read from a corner of the stage by the light of a

reading lamp, and the work of the actors was very like that of the reader, except that the former was raised into greater spectacular relief. There were many who felt that the production of *The Brothers Karamazov*, for all its simplicity, probably because of its simplicity, was more deeply moving than that of *Brand*.

But whatever the methods adopted the productions of the Art Theatre always give the sense of a mind and minds actively at work. There is nothing shoddy, musty, or hackneyed. The whole company is on the alert and each player has a feeling for the whole as well as for his own special part. It is an intelligent and admirably trained company with a strong conviction of the seriousness of the work to be done. It includes several actors of exceptional ability. Stanislavsky himself presents a singularly happy combination of a keen intellect with a rich temperament. Kachalov is an actor of a markedly intellectual type. Moskvin has a fortunate gift of spontaneity with a wide emotional range. Luzhsky is vigorous and versatile. Leonidov is a younger actor who displays a powerful, if uneven, temperament. The company is not nearly so strong in respect of actresses. Madame Knipper, Madame Lilina, and Madame Germanova who take the leading parts, play competently, but rarely rise above a certain rather sober level of excellence. Among the junior members of the company there is an abundance of talent.

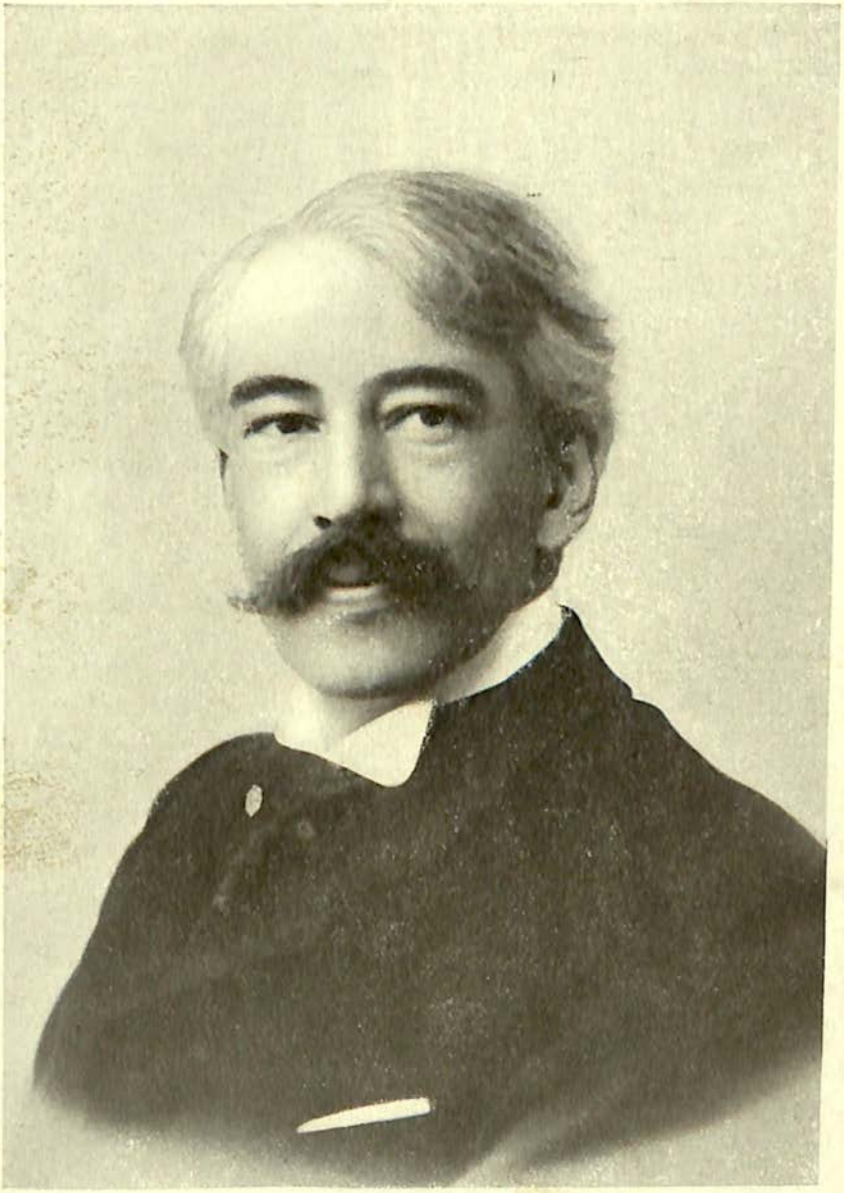
The capacities of this carefully chosen band of workers are enhanced by endless training. Not more than four new plays are given every year, and these are rehearsed over and over again until every detail has been brought to the utmost possible pitch of perfection. The intelligence of the players is constantly enlisted. Attached to the Theatre is a training-school called the Studio, the pupils of which under the guidance of Stanislavsky form a kind of autonomous company which chooses plays for preparation, and after careful study produce them before semi-private audiences consisting chiefly of relatives and friends. In 1913 the Studio gave several

public performances of the Dutch author Heyerman's *The Wreck of "The Hope,"* in a tiny hall in St. Petersburg, and the freshness, vigour, and enthusiasm of these performances was in marked contrast to the routine playing of the average theatre and explain the secret of the Art Theatre's success. Many of the members of the Studio take minor parts in the performances of the chief company.

The element of commercialism is absent. The actors and actresses of the company are paid salaries ranging from £10 to £60 per month and all receive a share of the profits at the end of the year. The profits are not very large, however. The expenses of production are heavy. The theatre in Moscow is a small one: the interior is beautiful in the simplicity and severity of its architectural lines, the ceiling is perfectly plain, devoid of all decoration, concealed electric lamps give a pleasant and mellow light. There is a revolving stage, and the stage appliances are the most up to date and most nearly perfect that can be found. This theatre is always filled during the season, and it is difficult to secure tickets. Yet the Moscow season does not wholly recoup the outlay, and it is only the annual St. Petersburg season after Easter when the performances are given in a larger but invariably crowded theatre that now secures the enterprise against financial loss. The original capital of the theatre was subscribed by a number of Moscow merchants out of pure interest in dramatic art and without any visible hope of return.

Among the ideals which the Moscow Theatre sets itself is the encouragement of Russian literature. Its early triumphs are associated with the plays of Chehov which gained public recognition only because of the extraordinarily minute, intelligent, and enthusiastic effort which the Moscow Theatre put into their production. Two of Chehov's plays, *Ivanov*, and *The Seagull*, met with complete failure on the Imperial stage before the Art Theatre came to the rescue. *Ivanov* was never recovered from oblivion, but *The Seagull* was, and it has become a symbol of Chehov's dramatic success as well as that

of Stanislavsky's theatre. Chehov's plays are clearly beyond the scope of the conventional theatre. They are almost entirely lacking in action, they consist of a series of situations representing changing moods and not the development of a plot. The events described are of the most ordinary character; the scenes are such as are familiar to every member of the audience. Unless extraordinary care is taken Chehov's plays on the stage may prove simply dull and uninteresting. The Moscow Art Theatre found the secret of producing them in the only way in which they could be made to utter a dramatic appeal. The sober realism of the plays had to be made expressive. All the petty details of the very ordinary situations described had to be made significant. Every tone and every movement in the players' parts, every detail of stage management had to be so determined and so adjusted that their combined effect would inevitably be to infect the audience with the mood and temper expressed by the author in the given situation. The problem was solved with wonderful success, and Chehov's plays lived on the Moscow stage. The performances of *The Seagull* aroused eager interest and violent controversy, but the opposition was gradually worn down by the unmistakable emphasis of the popular verdict. It was indeed a triumph of art to create out of that contradiction in terms, an actionless drama, a scenic work with a genuine power of aesthetic appeal. The Moscow Theatre simply made Chehov as a dramatist. Without Stanislavsky he would probably not have been a dramatist at all, because it was only the successful production of his first plays by Stanislavsky that encouraged him to write others. These others, *Three Sisters*, *Uncle Vania*, and *The Cherry Garden*, were treated by the Moscow Theatre with an affectionate care and with a success that has made them classics of the modern Russian stage. Other theatres can now venture to produce Chehov clumsily and imperfectly and yet attract an audience. Even in Bulgaria, which draws its intellectual inspirations directly from Russia, *The Cherry Garden* is now



K. STANISLAVSKY
(Head of the Moscow Art Theatre)

successfully played. In the répertoire of the Art Theatre Chehov's plays are now the popular favourites, and it was the effort to make Chehov's work expressive and intelligible on the stage that gave this theatre its characteristic stamp.

It was the Moscow Theatre, too, which made a playwright of an author who at one moment seemed to possess greater dramatic power than Chehov. In the year 1900 the production of *Uncle Vania* in Moscow had met with a success which was challenged by a great many of the critics. Chehov who was ill and living in Yalta, a health resort in the Crimea, was unable to see the performances. The management accordingly brought the whole company down to Yalta in the spring in order to learn his judgment. A large number of literary men and women and artists from St. Petersburg and Moscow were at that time living in Yalta, and the production of *Uncle Vania* in the local theatre aroused unbounded enthusiasm. One of the most enthusiastic of the spectators was Maxim Gorky, who at once determined that if this were the drama, he, too, would write plays. He accordingly wrote *Mieschane* which the Art Theatre produced in the following season, and later his most successful play, *In the Depths*.

Several of Andreiev's plays have been produced by the Moscow Theatre, but all the care bestowed fails to make them very convincing on the stage. And in spite of all the encouragement given by the existence of such a theatre Russian authors show a strong disinclination to write plays, and when they do write they are not often successful. The Art Theatre has, therefore, had to look farther back and farther afield for material. It has tried Shakespeare—the staging of *Julius Caesar* was raised to the utmost pitch of realism, while *Hamlet* was staged with the aid of Mr. Gordon Craig. It has applied its vividly realistic method to the production of Russian classics like Gogol's *Inspector-General*, Griboyedov's *The Mischief of being Clever*, and Alexis Tolstoy's historical drama *Tsar Feodor Ivanovich*. A charming idyll has been made of Turgeniev's *A Month in the Country*. Ibsen's *Brand*,

The Enemy of the People, *The Master Builder*, and *Peer Gynt* have been produced. The production of several plays by a living Norwegian author, Knut Hamsun, has led the Art Theatre from the open ways of realism into by-paths of symbolism in which interesting decorative results were achieved, although in symbolism the company is not altogether at home. During the last few years the Art Theatre has been experimenting in new methods, has adopted the suggestions of some of the reforming theatres in the West and has fallen into line with the new Russian movement for securing the co-operation of the most talented painters as designers of costumes. The recent appointment of Alexander Benois as designer and general adviser in the decorative work of the theatre seems to symbolise the fusion of those modern movements in painting and dramatic art which have now reached the dignified stage of general recognition.

It must be admitted that in becoming an institution the Moscow Theatre has lost some of its charm. An intellectual theatre of this type runs the danger of becoming academic. Its very success sets limits to its efforts. There is no diminution of energy and care in the management, but the freshness, the enthusiasm, the inspiriting atmosphere of ideas which characterised the theatre in former days are giving place to a routine that is probably inevitable, but is none the less disappointing. There is still great power in the theatre. A performance of *Peer Gynt* with Leonidov at his best in the chief part and with the scenery designed by Röhrich, who has an unrivalled sense of northern landscape and of mythological atmosphere, may still move very deeply. The Art Theatre is becoming set in its own methods. It has fixed a high standard, and yet after many of its performances one is left with a vague feeling of dissatisfaction and one wonders whether Kommisarzhevskaia's failure may not have been rather more worth while than the brilliant success of the Stanislavsky Theatre.

An essential element of the theatre which the Moscow

Theatre in its seriousness is apt to miss is sheer fun, spontaneous and unrestrained merriment. Players should play, but as a rule the Moscow players work very hard even when they produce comedies. Their excuse is that nothing is more insipid and intolerable than that accumulated atmosphere of stale and habitual humour that gathers around the conventional theatre. As though to meet a demand for fun that none of the regular theatres supply, a new type of playhouse has arisen, the so-called Miniature Theatre. Some of the members of the Art Theatre Company under the leadership of Baliev have established a theatre of this type in Moscow under the name of the Flying Mouse or The Bat, while a corresponding enterprise in St. Petersburg founded by an actress of the Imperial Theatre named Holmskaia, is known as The Crooked Looking Glass. These theatres give a variety of clever, quaint, and odd scenes, one act comedies, pastorals, and the like. The Bat tries to arouse the hilarity of its audiences by inducing them to sing a chorus, by provoking a general sneeze, or by letting loose toy balloons when the lights are out.

The Crooked Looking Glass has produced an amusing parody on the conventional opera under the name of *Vampuku*, and an extraordinarily clever parody on the methods of stage-managers in which a scene from Gogol's *Inspector-General* is produced in the old style, then in parodies in the style of the Moscow Art Theatre, of Max Reinhardt and of Gordon Craig. These Miniature Theatres maintain a high level of taste and humour and avoid coarseness, which is more than can be said of the average variety theatre in Russia.

Dramatic criticism is fairly represented, but cannot be described as excessively impartial. There is a great deal of interest in theatrical questions and the crisis of the stage, which so patently exists, is hotly discussed. MM. Meierhold and Evreinov and Prince Sergius Volkonsky, a former director of the Imperial theatres, have published books on the art

of the theatre, and the controversy on a theatre of marionettes as against the further cultivation of expressive power in the actor is being waged with energy. The popularity of the Dalcroze system of rhythmical gymnastics suggests that further developments will hardly lie in the direction of the marionette theatre. Great things have been dreamed of the theatre in Russia, and in a country where artistic instincts are so keen and the spirit of inquiry so strong it is quite possible that some of these dreams will be realised, although the present position is very like an impasse.

CHAPTER IX

PAINTING

RUSSIAN art is very new and very old. It has taken its place in the world of Western art but it is still sensitive to the East. And its sensitiveness to the East is not merely due to the Western rediscovery of the East which makes Frenchmen and Englishmen look with delighted surprise on the work of Japanese artists as upon something absolutely new. It is born of a close, direct, and ancient connection with the East, the memory of which lies deep in popular feeling and expresses itself in a hundred minutiae of costume, decorative art, legend, and idiom. The thoughts of Russians, their conscious aspirations are now fixed on the West, and the period of heightened, almost morbid sensitiveness to Western intellectual and artistic fashions is not yet over. But Western feeling in Russia is often coloured by a variety of subconscious influences which, on closer analysis, may be traced back to the older civilisations of the South and East, to Asia Minor, to Persia, Central Asia, and even to China. The springs of Russian art are rich and manifold. But this does not mean that Russian art has developed in proportion to its splendid potentialities. The East and Middle East is often more picturesque and is in many respects more artistic than Russia. The difference is that in the East art is stereotyped. In Russia it is in movement and the movement is constantly gathering impetus and awakening older influences to new life in a new time. There is a lack of artistic habit in modern Russia, but there is a great deal of artistic sensitiveness, effort, and aspiration. The achievement is already very considerable, but the Russians are an artistically gifted people and give the impression of being capable of infinitely greater work than anything already

Painting.

achieved. The very versatility of Russian talent renders it diffuse, and makes it difficult to define its precise qualities and tendencies. The Russians have given a striking demonstration of the originality and power of their talent in the novel and in music. They can point to the remarkable beauty of the old churches in Novgorod, in the Suzdal region, and in and around Moscow as a proof of their architectural talent. Have they a conspicuous talent for painting as well ? This is a question that is most difficult to answer because it is just in the matter of painting that the break between the old and the new Russia is most acutely felt.

A visitor to the museum of Alexander III, the gallery of the modern Russian school in St. Petersburg, might a few years ago have conceived very grave doubts as to the strength of the Russian genius in the sphere of graphic art. Passing from room to room he would probably have experienced a growing feeling of depression not unlike that produced by the architecture of the 'eighties and the 'nineties of the last century in most of the houses in the neighbourhood of the Nicholas Railway Station. Insipid landscapes by Shishkin, romantic highly coloured seascapes by Aivazovsky, conventional and historical pictures in which Tsars and boyars drearily bear the weight of the costumes of their period, huge and lifeless Oriental scenes by Semigradsky, groups of impossibly placid and sentimental peasants—the combined effect of such pictures as these is simply chilling. The Vereshchagin room seemed to promise some relief, but the colours in the big war pictures have faded, and the painter's assertive moralising, deprived of whatever justification it may once have had in brilliant colour effects, leaves one cold and indifferent. Vereshchagin's oriental scenes with their warmth of colour and elaboration of detail would serve as admirable illustrations for ethnographical and archaeological works. There are good portraits by Kramskoi and Ge, some charming old-fashioned genre pictures, such as Fedotov's " The Bride before the

Looking Glass," and "Inspecting the Bride," comforting flashes of talent in out-of-the-way corners. Yaroshenko's picture of the feeding of pigeons by prisoners from a railway-van has the attractiveness of a warm, humane mood expressed with a cheerful downrightness that would be impossible to-day. In the impetuosity and abounding vitality of Riepin there is something infectious. Some of his portraits of members of the Council of the Empire in its older form are distinctly impressive, particularly the portrait of Pobiedonostsev, and there is a great deal of rollicking humour in the picture of the Zaporogian Cossacks. There are many specimens of the work of Karl Brüllow, the most popular artist in the early half of the last century, but his "Last Day of Pompeii" that eighty years ago aroused such enthusiasm in Russia seems lifeless now.

The general effect was, and, in spite of recent additions, still very largely is, one of a curious disproportion between Russian painting and the magnificence of Russian achievement in other spheres of art. The impression is heightened by a comparison with the wealth of inspiring tradition and the vistas of great opportunity revealed in another St. Petersburg museum, the Imperial Hermitage, one of the richest picture-galleries in Europe. The upper story contains a splendid display of the work of the great Western masters. There is a fine collection of Rembrandts, Velasquez is well represented, there are Leonardos and Raphaels, Fra Angelicos and Giorgiones, Rubenses, and Van Dycks. It is a truly Imperial collection. The Western art, within whose sphere modern Russian art is developing, exercises a powerful influence here. In the lower story are represented the sources and origins, the distant beginnings of art upon the great plain, the products of excavations in the south and south-east of Russia, vases and a dazzling variety of ornament from the Greek colonies in the south of Russia, metal-work of the Sassanids from the neighbourhood of the Urals, rings and bracelets from Scythian mounds. The East of yesterday

is represented, too, by elaborately woven tissues and curious armour from Central Asia. Below, the inspiration of the sweep of ancient civilisations across the great plain. Above, the finest inspiration of the West. It would be hard to imagine a more resplendent setting for a powerful Russian art. And that is why the Alexander III Museum is so disappointing.

But the Alexander III Museum does not after all give a fair view of modern Russian painting; it is far from showing it at its best. A much more favourable impression is given by the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow, where the works of Russian and Western painters, of classics and moderns are so deftly intermingled as to create a sense of vital continuity, of a living movement of art in which Russia is co-operating with France and Germany and England. It is all the better for Russian art that Corot and Watteau and Manet are housed under the same roof as the Russians Levitan and Kuindzhi. The Russians fall into their true places, the sense of disproportion is lessened, the course of the development of Russian painting and its relation to Western schools is thrown into clearer relief, and what is characteristically Russian is more easily distinguished from what is the Western fashion of the moment. The fact, too, that the trustees of the Tretiakov Gallery follow with keen interest the movement of present-day Russian art and buy up the best work in the annual exhibitions is of immense importance for the formation of a just view, because during the last fifteen years there has been a striking revival in Russian painting, and much of the best work produced in Russia belongs to this period. The Alexander III Museum has, during the last two or three years, attempted to do a belated justice to the revival, but its purchases have not been extensive, and in the main it continues to represent an uninspiring and isolated yesterday.

The misfortune of Russian painting is that it has suffered from a series of breaks in its development. The most severe

wrench was given by Peter the Great, the result of whose passionate leap into Europe was a complete cessation of the older art tradition, while European art took root in Russia only very slowly, and it was long before anything like a fixed standard of taste was established. In fact the state of Russian art in the eighteenth century was so deplorable that the appearance of such an admirable portrait-painter as Levitsky, whose portraits have the undying charm of mastery combined with intimate truth, is difficult to understand. If a Levitsky was possible in such a period, then such fine portraits as the Emperor Paul or the Mlle. Lopuhina of Borovikovsky are less astounding. But it was only in portrait-painting that Russia at the close of the eighteenth century could hold her own.

The brilliant literary movement of the Pushkin and Gogol period at the beginning of the nineteenth century was not accompanied by a correspondingly vigorous movement in painting. But a marked advance was made even here. Russian artists were deeply influenced by the romantic movement, various phases of which were reflected in the masterpieces of Kiprensky, whose portrait of himself is one of the works that inevitably arrest attention in the Alexander III Museum, in the soothing and refreshing country scenes of Venetsianov and such work as the delightful interior representing the painter and his family by Count Feodor Tolstoy, also to be seen in the Alexander III Museum. Fedotov was another painter of interiors, whose work with its depth of feeling, sureness of touch, and restraint of manner shows a happy mingling of romanticism and realism. The early years of the nineteenth century were a very attractive period in the history of Russian art, one to which the artists of the present day very gladly turn their eyes. There was a great deal of dilettantism, there was little real mastery, but scores of pictures painted then reveal such unaffected delight in beauty for its own sake that they are more pleasant to look upon than anything painted in Russia until toward the close

of the century. Moreover, the period produced a painter whom many modern critics are inclined to consider the greatest of all Russian artists, Alexander Ivanov.

Ivanov was a most interesting man, but of his artistic power it is almost impossible to judge by his completed pictures. His most famous work, "The Appearance of Christ to the People," which hangs in the Rumiantsev Museum in Moscow, reveals far less inspiration than the sketches by which it is surrounded. It is, in fact, in his unfinished sketches, his studies, that the free and powerful movement of the artist's talent finds its best expression. Ivanov throughout his life maintained a religious attitude to art, regarded his work as religious service. Born in 1806 he spent his childhood and youth in the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg, where his father was a professor, and where he himself received his training. The growth of his talent was impeded by the dulling, deadening academic influences of his time, but a Society for the Promotion of Art sent him to Rome where he gradually found his true self. In Rome he devoted himself passionately to his art, held aloof from society, lived in poverty, and groped after methods of expressing the great conceptions inspired in him by the work of the Italian masters and the study of the gospel. The personality of Christ and the high ardour of spiritual conflict fascinated him, and he made unwearying efforts to give form and colour to his dream. He longed to go to Palestine in order to see Biblical scenes with his own eyes, but in default of means for the journey he visited a synagogue in Rome and studied the Jews in Leghorn. His studies of the head of Christ include a stern Hebrew face and the head of an Apollo Belvedere. He made a large number of sketches and water-colour studies of Biblical and, more especially gospel scenes which in spite of their unfinished character are striking in their freshness of intuition. "Christ teaching in the Temple," "Christ teaching His Disciples," "Christ reading the Law and the

Ivanov.

Prophets,"—these are some of the studies that indicate how perpetually and deeply the gospel story occupied Ivanov's mind. His mystical tendencies were intensified by his association with the German artist Overbeck. But they were a part of his nature, and even when, after the revolutions of 1848, he formally abandoned his faith, professed socialist ideals, and became the friend of Herzen and Chernishevsky, he remained a believer in spite of himself. For a time he fought against his longing to paint pictures on religious subjects, holding that this would be sinful for such an unbeliever as he now was. His very unbelief took the direction of his belief. When he wished to supplement the deficiencies of his general education he addressed himself to Strauss, the author of the " Life of Christ." He was, in fact, profoundly religious to the end, and when in 1857 he finally returned to Russia to exhibit " The Appearance of Christ to the People," on which he had worked for twenty years, he was coldly received, because in the prevailing materialism his mysticism was regarded as out of date. He died in the following year. His was a strange fate. His sketches and studies in the Rumiantsev Museum, the Tretiakov Gallery, and in the Botkin collection in St. Petersburg present a wealth of ideas, a boldness and originality of method, that suggest the discovery of a new world of art. Such sketches are that entitled " Joseph's Dream " (" Fear not to take Mary "), for instance, in which an angel of superhuman stature leads Mary enveloped in rays of light, or that strange study of the Lord writing the laws for Moses which is permeated with oriental mysticism. Ivanov's work had, indeed, the character of a groping back to the sources of great Russian art. It touched that sphere from which the old Russian iconographers drew their inspiration and which, towards the end of the century, was again approached by the most striking of the Russian artists of the latest period, Vrubel. When Ivanov tried to paint great pictures, however, he seems to have been paralysed by his academic training and the freshness and vigour manifested

in his studies abandoned him. Neither the "Christ and Mary Magdalene," in the Alexander III Museum, nor "The Appearance of Christ to the People" suffice to account for his growing reputation.

Ivanov's contemporary, Karl Brüllow, also a son of the professor in the Academy of Arts, was the first of Russian painters who won fame in his own country.

Brüllow.

He was a typical academist, conventional in manner, with great technical skill and a passion for brilliant effects. He, too, studied in Rome, where he rapidly attained prominence. Here he painted that immense picture, "The Last Day of Pompeii," which now hangs in the Alexander III Museum and which, just after its completion, caused the Italian Press to rank its author with Raphael and Michel Angelo and aroused the enthusiasm of even Walter Scott. On his return to Russia Brüllow had a triumphal reception, was fêted, crowned with laurels, praised by Pushkin and Gogol, and overwhelmed with orders. He was made professor in the Academy of Arts and was entrusted with the work of painting the frescoes on the interior of the cupola of St. Isaac's Cathedral. This work illness compelled him to interrupt, and he died in Rome in 1852. His work is most fully represented in the Alexander III Museum in St. Petersburg which contains forty-seven of his pictures. Brüllow was greatly influenced by Guido Reni and Domenico, and also by Poussin, and his dashing manner, his firmness of touch and his boldness of outline struck the imagination of the Russian public of his time and aroused general interest in the art of painting. His technical skill had a good effect in raising the standard of workmanship in the Academy of Arts, which up till then had been very low. In any case the place of Brüllow in the history of Russian painting is an important one, and although of late years it has been the fashion to deride him, some discerning critics are now beginning to point out certain valuable and original qualities in his pictures. For all that

the work of Brüllow presents little more than a local and historical interest.

And then after Ivanov and Brüllow there was again a break; a long, dull period of tendency art, or art with a purpose. Painting being, with the one exception of sculpture, the most feebly developed of all the arts in Russia, it suffered much more than either literature or music from the Nihilism that made its appearance in the 'sixties. When art was vehemently denied by the most popular leaders of thought in the name of the absolute supremacy of science it was a marvel that anyone painted at all. But the Academy continued to exist and trained painters, and these painters had to work in an atmosphere of an insistent denial of art. On the one hand there was the chilling influence of academic routine which had been reinforced by the success of Brüllow. On the other hand the most popular critics repudiated direct artistic vision and encouraged an absorption in theories, generalisations, and ideas. Employing academic methods the painters of the period tried to express ideas in their pictures, or repressing the play of fancy and the imagination to attain what they called "truth to life." Pictures must have a "subject" that could be stated in words. They must have a moral or social purpose. They must influence the mind of the beholder in the direction of a given theory. The curious thing is that this very denial and distortion of pure art made painting more popular. People did not cease to paint. There were more painters than ever before, and they induced a steadily widening circle to look at and admire their pictures. The "Back to the People" social theory ensured popularity for pictures in which peasant life was idealised. A typical picture of this kind is that of a teacher in a village school by Bogdanov-Bielsky, which now hangs in the Alexander III Museum. Nationalist influences played their part, too, and caused many painters to search for subjects in Russian history. Kramskoi was one of the early leaders of the movement, and Kramskoi was a man of keen intellect and deep

feeling, yet most of his work with the exception of his admirable portraits seems astonishingly below the real strength of the man. In a letter written in 1872 to a friend, a letter revealing the moral intensity which was the finest element in the art of his school and his time, Kramskoi thus describes the temper in which he painted his picture of "Christ in the Wilderness." "While I was working at it I thought much, prayed much, and suffered much. Sometimes of an evening you go for a walk, and wander along over the fields, on and on you walk until horror comes upon you, and then of a sudden you see a figure, a statue. At dawn, weary, agonised, worn with suffering, he sits alone among the stones, sad, cold stones; his hands spasmodically and firmly clenched, his fingers pressed into his palms, his feet wounded, his head sunken. He is plunged in thought; long has he been silent, so long that his lips seem to be baked dry; his eyes take no notice of surrounding objects, and only the brows twitch from time to time obedient to the laws of muscular movement. He feels nothing: he does not even feel that it is a little cold, does not feel that all his limbs are as though numbed from sitting so long motionless. There is not a movement anywhere, only on the horizon black clouds float from the East, and a few stray hairs afloat in the air stand horizontal in the breeze. And he is thinking and thinking. It grows terrible. How often have I wept before this figure! What then? Can that be painted? And you ask yourself and properly ask, Can I paint Christ? No, my dear fellow, I cannot, and I could not paint Him; I did paint, and painted until I had put the picture in a frame, painted until I and others had seen the picture. In a word, I committed an act of profanation, it may be, but could not but paint, I had to paint. . . . I can say that I painted Him with tears and blood. But probably my tears and my blood were not of quite good quality, for sometimes it seems to me that what I have painted is little like the figure I saw in the night time, and sometimes it seems as though there were no likeness at all.

In a word, I have the melancholy consciousness that there is no other lot for me but to paint the most trivial portraits of ordinary people—this is not false humility and you understand, and I hope will understand in what sense I say this." Altogether in reading Kramskoi's letters one feels that he was bigger and finer than his own art.

The main stream of the movement in time acquired a name. It was called *Peredvizhnichestvo*, from the *Peredvizhnia Vystavki*, or movable exhibitions which constituted the first attempt to disseminate a knowledge of painting in the Empire by giving the provincial towns an opportunity of seeing the annual exhibitions of the capitals. The popularisation of painting is one of the greatest services to Russian art rendered by the *Peredvizhniki*, and perhaps it was only by means of the didactic pictures, the paintings with a subject, a pathetic scene or an obvious purpose, which formed the staple of the exhibitions that the mass of the public not only in the provincial towns, but also in the capitals could have been induced to look at pictures at all. The influence of the movement is still strongly felt, and there are hundreds who prefer the chromo-lithographic methods of Vladimir Makovsky or the sentimentalism of Maksimov to the best work of the later schools.

Even in the worst periods there are born artists whose talent will out in spite of themselves and of their environment. The whole didactic movement was in a curiously ambiguous position. It involved an attempt to paint and not to paint at the same time, to mask, by colour and line, a covert denial of principles of art. But such a position was not easily tenable, and even its most determined defenders, such as Kramskoi, were sometimes carried away by a purely artistic impulse and painted with sincerity and vigour. Vereshchagin, the tireless traveller, the musing spectator of ghastly battlefields, the semi-official painter of the Steel and Iron Period of the bureaucracy, whose didacticism took the semi-official form of pacifism but was yet sincere, the depictor of

the horrors of war who, by a strange irony of fate, met his death in the blowing up of the Petropavlovsk in Port Arthur —Vereshchagin was strong enough often to allow himself the luxury of painting as his heart moved him. But there is another much more powerful artist who belongs wholly to the period of the Peredvizhniki and accepted their principles without demur, but by the very force and energy of his talent frequently broke down the barriers of his school.

Riepin.

Ilia Riepin is a born artist. Of peasant birth, self-taught, he painted out of sheer high spirits, out of an irrepressible delight in the mere process of painting. He early came under the influence of the chief authority of the "art with a purpose" movement, the critic Vladimir Stasov, and has never been able to shake off the fetters of his school. He is hampered by a certain intellectual inertness. But he was sharply distinguished from his contemporaries, not only by the vigour of his talent, but by his constant striving after perfection in workmanship. He paints illustrative pictures, pictures with a subject, pictures of popular life, but even the illustrative or didactic purpose cannot wholly repress Riepin's imaginative energy or dim the excellence of his workmanship. His most characteristic works are "The Zaporogian Cossacks," in the Alexander III Museum, and in the Tretiakov Gallery the pictures of "The Haulers," and of Ivan the Terrible holding in his arms the son whom he had murdered. "The Haulers" vividly depicts a picturesque band of labourers on the Volga and is a striking specimen of the populist type of picture. "Ivan the Terrible" is much better painted than any other historical picture of the period, but the agony of the Tsar is too obtrusively expressed to be wholly convincing now. In fact most of Riepin's pictures now have the unfortunate quality of attracting attention but failing to arouse any deep emotion, just because the desire to arouse emotion is too obvious. But several portraits of his are of permanent value—not that of the barefoot Tolstoy, which is sentimental and

unreal, but those of the composer Musorgsky and some of the members of the Council of the Empire—and his unfailing joy in his art constantly wages a battle, often a successful one, with the defects he owed to his school. Riepin now lives in Kuokkala, just over the Finnish frontier, and occasionally exhibits. But with the decline of his vitality his defects have grown more glaringly apparent, and such a picture as that recent one of a street procession after the promulgation of the Constitution is depressing in its lack of proportion and taste.

Nicholas Ge was another artist who was far better than his time. It is strange how frequently he rose not only above his environment, but above his own defective and careless workmanship, for which probably his environment was in the long run chiefly responsible. Ge possessed a curious and original talent, and, moreover, while he accepted generally the ideals of the didactic school he possessed, in contrast with most of his friends among the intelligentsia, strong religious interests. It was his religious interests that served to liberate his talent from the influence of the dulling Nihilist aspect of current positivism and materialism. He was a friend of Tolstoy's, sharing the great writer's enthusiasm for the Gospel, but not his denial of art. With all these qualities he cultivated a stern realism, and this led him to some astonishing results. His "Golgotha," for instance, which hangs in the Luxembourg in Paris, has in its terrible earnestness a tragic power and intensity that is reminiscent of Russian realism in its great moments. The realistic method is employed in another striking Gospel picture in the Tretiakov Gallery entitled "What is Truth," in which an ascetic Christ who here, too, "hath no form or comeliness that we should desire him," stands before a stout and contemptuous Pilate. There is a study of Ivanov's on the same subject, and it is interesting to compare the two, for there is a certain unmistakable spiritual affinity between these artists. Ge is, perhaps, more a man of his own period than an isolated genius like Ivanov.

Ge.

What Ge expressed seems to have been the essentially religious aspiration which, in spite of a vehement denial of religion, was implicit in the positivist social effort of his time. Besides that, Ge was a most talented portrait painter with a fine sense of colour, and such a portrait as that of Mme. Petrunkevich, a lady standing at the window of a country house before an avenue of lime-trees, is full of a warm and delightful humanness.

About the beginning of the 'nineties there were indications of a new movement in painting just as there were signs of a change in literature. Certain artists grew weary of the perpetual subjugation of art to various "purposes," and tried to free themselves from the fetters of the didactic school. For this change the influence of Riepin at his best was partly responsible, and Chistiakov, a professor of the Academy of Arts, who had an unrivalled knowledge of the technique of painting, a passion for the Italian masters, and an exhilarating enthusiasm for colour effects, imparted his zest to several of his pupils. Other influences operated, too—French impressionism, the work of Germans like Böcklin, Mensel, and Wilhelm Leibl, and some subtle change in the spirit of the times. The movement of change was a gradual one and did not gather strength until towards the end of the nineties, but its final result was to bring to the front a number of first-class artists, to bring about a revolution in taste that twenty years ago would have seemed incredible, and firmly to establish painting as an art in Russia. Up till about 1908 the representatives of the older school maintained a stubborn conflict with the modernists, but now the conflict is practically over, for the critics, with insignificant exceptions, are now wholly on the side of the new school, while some of the younger artists now consider even the modernists out of date. And one very important result has been effectively to repudiate the suggestion the Museum of Alexander III seemed formerly to convey, that the artistic genius of the Russians had failed them when it came to painting.

The beginnings of the new movement are closely associated with the names of the landscape-painter Levitan, the marvellous portrait-painter Sérov, and Vrubel, the master of colour who saw strange visions. Through these men and their immediate successors the Russian spirit came to its own. They showed how to draw freely from the wells of the hidden thought of the nation. This is most easily seen in the case of Levitan, who was not wholly of the new movement and had but a slight connection with the old. He gave an intimate interpretation of that landscape which counts for so much in the mental make-up of the Russian people. And his suggestion of the inner meaning of field and forest and river pointed the way out from the narrow limits of didacticism and realism into that broad world of spiritual discovery in which the Russian people is most truly at home. Levitan was a friend of Chehov's, and the painter and the writer had much in common. Their work had a solvent power. Both Chehov's stories and Levitan's pictures created a mood, indefinite and dreamy, but liberating by reason of its very contemplativeness. There was nothing challenging in this mood. It aroused little conflict, and both Levitan and Chehov secured recognition during their brief lifetime. But when the Russian public had been drawn subtly into the mood, old prejudices gradually lost their hold, and the way was prepared for the new range of ideas that has transformed Russian painting and opened a new period in Russian literature.

Landscape.

The Russian landscape is not monotonous as it may often appear when seen from the window of a railway train. On the contrary it is rich, suggestive, and full of variety and colour. The plain has a fascination that steadily grows as it little by little reveals its manifold beauties. What moves most deeply is the sense of limitless space, and then with this sense gradually mingle the colour and scent and sound and gleam of the passing seasons—the sudden and tumultuous outburst of

brilliant green in the spring, the dark and unchanging pine-forests relieved by slim trunks of birches with leaves bright and joyously waving; the unfenced fields of tall and swaying rye and all the wealth and glory of the summer, the far-flowing rivers with tall sails of barges or a steamer rounding a distant bend, the long line of a village on the crest of a hill, a lake gleaming in the sun and reflecting a gallant and endless procession of clouds in a fathomless sky, a white church or monastery half concealed on the border of forest and meadow, air that is all light poured forth unceasingly; the bright green of spring and summer yielding to the glowing and golden triumph of an autumn hushed and at rest in completed effort; and then the long winter with its subtler and more remote beauty of snow and sky, and the sighing of winds from the end of the world, and enfolding silences. In the south of Russia there is the beauty of the steppes covered with wild-flowers in spring, that wide-rolling, uplifting expanse that moved Gogol to cry when words failed him, "Damn it all, how lovely you are, you steppes!" And the north has in May and June its white nights that are not so beautiful in the city where their pale light falls on dead masses of stone and deserted squares, but beyond the city gates where forest and river and sleeping village become the ghostly substance of a dream, and where on the distant horizon the sunset glows only a hand's breadth away from the mounting dawn.

Levitan.

Levitan entered into the spirit of the scenery of Northern and Central Russia. There had been landscape-painters before him. Silvester Shchedrin, who lived in Italy in the twenties of the last century, has left beautiful Italian landscapes. Venetsianov and his followers treated the tender and more idyllic aspects of Russian scenery. Shishkin was a realist, conscientious, laborious, and dull, but his faithful study of nature had a useful effect on the development of Russian landscape-painting. Kuindzhi, who died two or three years ago, and

several of whose pictures hang in the Tretiakov Gallery, had his moments of discernment, boldness, and power, though his methods were conventional. Levitan found a way of his own of expressing the intimate beauty of Russian landscape. He was not a Russian by race. He was the son of a Jewish teacher who made a bare living by giving lessons. But he grew up in Moscow in and around which the Russian spirit is at its strongest, and he proved remarkably sensitive to Russian influence. Even the spirit of the Orthodox Church affected him, and it is related that he would often slip quietly into a village church during evening service and listen to the singing. He was trained in the 'seventies in the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, and in spite of his extreme poverty distinguished himself as a pupil. Naturally he at first yielded to the influence of the dominant school and especially of Shishkin. But Polienov, a pupil of the St. Petersburg professor Chistiakov, whose teaching had a stimulating effect on a number of Moscow artists, suggested to him a new attitude towards the treatment of light. The friendship of other talented artists, Korovin, Sérov, and Ostrouhov, a residence at Plios on the Volga above Nizhni-Novgorod, journeys abroad, more especially a visit to Paris during the exhibition of 1889, deepened his artistic sensitiveness and led him to new discoveries in craftsmanship. His early pictures were not accepted by the committee of the Movable Exhibitions, but from 1888 until the end of the 'nineties his pictures were hung annually by this the most influential arbiter of that day. The freshness and originality of his work attracted general attention, and the fact that in some of the best of his pictures exhibited in the early 'nineties traces of the influence of the " art with a purpose " school are to be seen in a certain insistence on effective aspects in landscape, made Levitan all the more acceptable to a public accustomed to striking pictorial effects. His picture entitled " A Quiet Habitation," showing a monastery on a river-bank under the shadow of a forest, and another well-known

picture, "Eternal Peace,"—showing a little wooden church with wooden crosses over a few graves on a headland on the Volga, and before it the sweep of waters, above the expanse of the sky,—are examples of this manner. Later Levitan used his gift of poetic intuition in revealing the beauty of the most ordinary scenes, he cultivated a greater reserve of manner, a power to express intimate beauty by the simplest means. "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," "Winter," the names of these later pictures and studies mean little, the pictures speak for themselves. Levitan may almost be said to have discovered the beauty of Russian scenery. One of the most distinguished of living artists and critics, Alexander Benoit, has declared that it was only after the appearance of Levitan's pictures that he began to believe in the charm of nature in Russia. Levitan was a poet with a fine sense of the music of colour and line, and the effect of his work has been gently to lead on into a new world of natural beauty in which there is nearly always a tinge of sadness. He enjoyed success during his lifetime, but he was restless in his forward movement, chafed under the bonds of the prevailing school, and gladly welcomed the innovators who made their appearance towards the end of the 'nineties. Death prevented his throwing in his lot entirely with the new movement. He passed away in 1900 at the age of forty. A characteristic saying of his was, that it is the ideal of a landscape-painter to render his mentality so sensitive as to hear the very grass growing.

Levitan's friend, Valentin Sérov, who died in 1911, was the best portrait-painter of his time in Russia, and one of the best in Europe. He went his own way from the very beginning. His portrait of Mlle. Mamontova, exhibited in Moscow in 1887, when he was only twenty-two years old, aroused amazement by its vividness, its originality, and its brilliant technique. And from year to year since that time his portraits have given sure, unfailing, and constantly deepening

Sérov.

pleasure. His work convinces and delights. It is at once severely true and serenely beautiful. Sérov never flattered his sitters, never tried to flatter them. He was, in fact, rather inclined to emphasise their weak points, and his portraits often contain a faint element of irony. This irony is in itself a relief from the sentimentalism, the merely external realism of the earlier school. Yet his portraits are very real, very living. They startle by their revelation of the singular beauty of mere vitality. The sitters are often very ordinary people, neither particularly handsome nor particularly ugly. But Sérov discovers the special and personal way in which they concentrate and express the invincibly beautiful process called life. Their personality is interpreted in relation to beauty. Sometimes the interpretation is merciless, and the striking portrait of the dancer, Ida Rubinstein, which now hangs in the Alexander III Museum, is almost vindictive in the severity of its criticism.

Sérov was the son of the well-known composer who died when the boy was eight years old. Two years afterwards in Paris he made the acquaintance of Riepin who took great interest in Sérov and secured his admission to the St. Petersburg Academy at the early age of fifteen. There he studied under Professor Chistiakov, whose erudition and enthusiasm counted for a great deal in Sérov's development. But he revolted against academic routine and left without completing his course. His association with the family of the Moscow manufacturer Mamontov, a man of broad culture and an ardent patron of painting, music, and the drama, had a strong educative influence on Sérov. The result of his varied training was that he acquired that imprint of fine general culture which is characteristic of most of the Russian artists of the latest period. He was a man of great sincerity, abhorred all forms of compromise, valued liberty above all things, and was consistently true to himself and to his talent. The Peredvizhniki did not recognise Sérov's talent until towards the end of the 'nineties when he had far outgrown them. He became one of

the leaders among the new school of artists grouped around the review *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art), and by this group he was honoured as a guide and a master. His early death at the age of forty-six was felt as an irreparable loss. A great many of his best portraits are privately owned, but some are to be seen in the public galleries. The Alexander III Museum has portraits of the Princess Orlova and the painter's father, the composer Alexander Sérov, as well as a number of studies for theatrical decorations, and Sérov's work is well represented in the Tretiakov Gallery of the Advisory Council, of which he was for many years a member.

Sérov as an admirable portrait-painter belongs wholly to the world of Western European art, and there is little in him that is distinctively Russian except, perhaps, the quality of his irony. He was one of those painters who by virtue of broad culture and fine workmanship maintained and developed a rich vital connection with Western tradition and influence. Vrubel, the friend of Levitan and Sérov, and the most interesting and the most perplexing of modern Russian painters, was an artist of a very different character. He was of Polish origin, and his work is more pronouncedly Russian than that of many painters who are Russian by birth, just as the Jew Levitan displayed a peculiar sensitiveness to the inner meaning of Russian landscape. But Vrubel was born in Kiev, where the Byzantine tradition of the Russians and not the Latin tradition of the Poles has the strongest hold. He studied classical philology at the St. Petersburg University, and by education, though not in instinct and manner, he was a Russian. Perhaps the very fact of non-Russian origin accounts for a heightened sensitiveness to certain distinctively Russian impressions. At any rate, Vrubel's interest turned towards the ecclesiastical origins of Russia, and during a residence in Italy he made a special study of the Byzantine frescoes and mosaics in Ravenna. In the early stages of his career he was greatly influenced by the work of Alexander

Vrubel.

MICHAEL VRUBEL

Ivanov, whose mysticism and Orientalism were peculiarly attractive to him. He was engaged, together with the artist Victor Vasnetsov, to paint frescoes on the walls of the Cathedral of St. Vladimir in Kiev, but the officials in charge of the work looked on Vrubel with disfavour, and not one of his studies found a place on the walls. Vrubel's suggestions are said, however, to have been of great value to Vasnetsov, who was a capable artist, and in an attempt to revive ecclesiastical art has done some interesting work which might have been more valuable had he not so quickly fallen into subjection to conventional influences. In the museum at Kiev there is a remarkable sketch of Vrubel's for the St. Vladimir frescoes representing the Resurrection. The sketch is full of a strange spirit of asceticism mingled with a remote, barely perceptible ecstasy. The figure of Christ is conceived in the stern, unearthly Byzantine temper, the character of the halo encircling a shining cross is suggestive of Ivanov, while the angels on either side are thoroughly Oriental. Vrubel's fate resembles that of Ivanov in that the best of his work consists of unfinished or undeveloped sketches and studies. But these sketches and studies display such an extraordinarily and original genius, such a rich play of fancy, such a fine sensitiveness to spiritual discords suggestive of unattainable harmonies, that one hardly regrets that he was unable to bring his work to completion. Perhaps its very incompleteness is one of the essential features of such allusive, such highly-strained work as that of Vrubel. Much of his energy was expended on purely decorative effects, on endlessly curious combinations of line and colour, which in their sheer delightful purposelessness form as sharp a contrast as anything that could be imagined to the superficial realism of the earlier school.

The most striking picture of Vrubel's, the picture by which his name will always be remembered, is " The Demon," in the Tretiakov Gallery. This picture was hung at the " World of Art " Exhibition in 1906, which marked a turning-point in

the attitude of the general public towards the new school and presaged its final victory. Vrubel was suffering at that time from the mental trouble which clouded his later days, and in his sad delirium he used to go down to the exhibition and retouch his picture again and again. The work bears unmistakable traces of this treatment; there is insanity in the eyes of the demon, and perhaps it was the effort of giving form to his tremendous conception that overtaxed the artist's faculties. It is curious that he should have chosen such a subject, curious and very characteristic of the tendency of Russian art to return at certain stages to the world of Eastern mysticism. Byron wrote of " a woman wailing for her demon lover." The phrase impressed the Russian poet Lermontov. In the atmosphere of Eastern legend that surrounds the towering mountains of the Caucasus Lermontov developed the suggestion and produced his finest poem " The Demon," which tells of the tragic love of a proud, solitary, world-weary demon for the daughter of a Georgian chieftain. Vrubel, whose imagination most readily responded to the call of the East, seems to have felt an influence even more thrilling and profound than that suggested by the fierce intensity of Lermontov's description of the demon aimlessly winging his hopeless way around the peaks of the Caucasus. The picture stands as an acutely distressing and amazingly beautiful record of what he felt. The unspeakably tragic face of the demon, gazing out from amidst a confused mass of cloud and wing, the shimmering of pale colour, the light that has lost the joy of light, the subtlety of the symbolical details of the hundreds of restless curves and folds in the feathers and the clouds—the picture is a last conquest of beauty over despair. Vrubel did not recover his reason and died two years after this picture was first exhibited.

Levitan, Sérov, and Vrubel were liberators. Their work as it gradually accumulated before the public eye made work of the older type almost impossible. There was a fierce struggle between the new school and the old. The leading

critic of the older school, Vladimir Stasov, would have nothing to do with the innovators, but the innovators had on their side great resources. They were not only talented artists, but cultivated men. The foundation by MM. Serge Diagilev and Filosofov of the review, *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art), in 1898, gave a great impetus to the new movement and brought it into close connection with the corresponding movement in literature. Polemical articles, accounts of the latest developments in Western art, studies in Russian peasant and ecclesiastical art, together with admirable reproductions, and verse and prose calculated to arouse greater sensitiveness to all the finer forms of art made the review a most effective organ of attack on prevailing conservatism. The review ceased publication in 1904. Its work was partly continued by Briusov's organ *Viesy* (The Scales), and partly by the *Zolotoe Runo* (Golden Fleece), an expensive illustrated organ published in Russian and French in Moscow from 1906 to 1908. The only illustrated art review existing at present is the *Apollon*, published in St. Petersburg, which soberly treads the paths opened up with so much daring and energy by the *Mir Iskusstva*.

The artists grouped around the *Mir Iskusstva* formed a society of their own for exhibition purposes. Then this society split up and reformed, and disappeared and reappeared, so that there are now several societies which include artists representing the new movement. And, indeed, the movement is no longer new. It is generally recognised. It holds the field. Those of its pioneers who are still alive are now the most highly honoured artists in Russia. The principle they so insistently advocated, the principle of individual liberty of expression, has become a commonplace to the extent that a small group of Futurists now receives a tolerant hearing. And there are signs of a reverse process; some of the pioneers of individualism are suggesting the necessity of a new standard, a new canon of painting.

In any case the result of the liberative movement in

painting has been to bring to the front a very large number of talented artists. There are at present so many artists in Russia who paint good pictures that an exhibition of the modern school is rarely disappointing. Something is very perceptibly lacking now that Vrubel and Sérov have passed away, but on the part of those who remain there is a great variety of interesting effort. One of the great advantages of the new school is the free play it gives to individual talent. So many diverse forms of effort are represented here. There are, for instance, historical painters of varying types eager to discover and reveal the beauty of the past of Russia. The new movement in historical painting began in the late 'eighties with Victor Vasnetsov and Surikov, the latter of whom was particularly successful in the employment of new technical methods to express his deep poetic sense of the meaning of the past. Well-known pictures of Surikov's are "The Conquest of Siberia by Yermak and the Cossacks," in the Alexander III Museum, and that of the "Boyarina Morozova," who was persecuted for her support of the Old Believers, in the Tretiakov Gallery. Some critics note affinities between Surikov and Dostoievsky, and Surikov's work is certainly far removed from anything in the nature of conventional and official historical painting. M. Nesterov at one time gave promise of being a penetrating and original painter of traditional Russia, but when he mentally submitted to tradition instead of remaining simply a sympathetic observer he became conventional and sentimental in his treatment. A good example of his early work is seen in "The Hermit" in the Tretiakov Gallery. His later manner is represented by a number of pictures in the Alexander III Museum.

The New Movement.

The delight in Russian scenes and Russian tradition is expressed more intensely by several artists who represent a later stage of the new movement, and do not attempt to observe realistic principles. Ivan Bilibin is attracted by the style of popular art, by the queer conventionalised figures to

be found in old chap-books or carved or painted on the old-fashioned wooden vessels of the peasantry. He excels in the illustration of fairy-tales and in the humorous presentation of various scenes from Russian mythology. Like all the artists of the new school he has joined ardently in the movement for raising theatrical decorations to the level of fine art.

Nicholas Roehrich is at once an archaeologist and an artist possessed of a fine sense of fitness in style. The scenes over which he broods in imagination as an archaeologist, scenes of the coming of the Vikings over the northern waters, of an enclosure for idols in pre-historic Russia, of some Russian maiden of ancient days dreaming of her lover on a hillside, he presents with a quaint assumption of conventionalised outline and colouring that is reminiscent of old tapestries, but does not conceal a very warm and living artistic interest in the distant past.

An eager interest in the real Russia as it is to-day is evinced by that powerful and original artist, Maliavin, whose pictures of Russian peasant women are simply astonishing in their glow of colour and their turbulence of animal spirits.

In St. Petersburg there is a group of artists who are attracted not so much by the distant past of Russia as by the comparatively near past of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. E. Lanceret has painted very pleasant pictures of the Empress Elizabeth and of a naval inspection in the reign of Peter the Great. M. Dobuzhinsky, a talented Lithuanian from Vilna, has a good picture of Peter the Great shipbuilding, but his best work consists in a presentation of the cold, hard spirit of machinery, in laying bare the skeleton of the modern town. Dobuzhinsky also has some quaint scenes from old by-streets in Vilna and some very good portraits.

An artist of great influence and authority in St. Petersburg is Alexander Benois, who may be called the leader of the St. Petersburg group. Benois rarely deals with Russian subjects, although the past of Russia has not altogether escaped the

range of his extraordinary productivity. His congenial sphere is eighteenth century France, more especially the Versailles of Louis XIV to which he returns year after year with the same unfailing tenderness of retrospective imagination. In numberless water-colour pictures he recalls all the dreamy and pleasant nooks, the green bowers, the sleeping ponds of that distant haven of repose. Benois is an art critic of knowledge and discernment, and he first distinguished himself by writing, while yet a student at the St. Petersburg University, an account of Russian art for the *History of Art* by the well-known German critic, Richard Muther. Benois took a prominent part in the battles fought around the *Mir Iskusstva*, and has constantly championed the new movement in the press. Of late years he has been in great demand as a designer of scenery and costumes for the theatre, and he has been engaged as chief adviser on questions of decorative art to the Moscow Art Theatre.

Konstantin Somov is another St. Petersburg painter who is attracted by eighteenth century France. But his work has not the dreamy contemplativeness of Benois. There is something bitter in his brilliant and concentrated statement of the splendour of the pre-revolutionary period. His work resembles a series of cameos in its minuteness of finish, its fineness of proportion, and its extraordinary vividness of detail. And throughout his paintings, in his boudoirs, his trim avenues, his covert meetings in cool by-ways, there is an implicit and subtle satire upon the confused and ungainly present, an acrid assertion of the claims of an artificial world. As a portrait-painter Somov is only to be compared with Sérov, and his portrait of his father, for many years Curator of the Collections in the Hermitage, is a masterpiece. Strangely enough the curious bitterness that marks so many of Somov's eighteenth century studies disappears in his portraits.

Ivor Grabar is a scholar-artist of wide and precise learning, who after exhibiting a number of pictures that displayed an unusual mastery of light effects—one picture entitled " Hoar

Frost " may be particularly instanced—has devoted himself to the publication of a *History of Russian Art* in several volumes, and to the congenial work of criticism and selection involved in his present position as one of the curators of the Tretiakov Gallery.

The work of the decorative artists, Golovin, Bakst, and Sudeikin has attracted widespread attention because of the brilliant results they have achieved in the sphere of theatrical decoration. It was only the new movement with its complete emancipation from conventional subject and purpose and its assertion of the principle of liberty of expression that made possible the play of fancy, the roving alertness to varied suggestion which led to a revival of purely decorative art. In this particular sphere Russian art has made real discoveries.

There is one artist, who died in 1910 after a very brief career, and who stands apart from nearly all his contemporaries in his whole manner of expression. This is Churlianis, a young Lithuanian musician and painter, whose attempts to give colour and outline to musical suggestions form an interesting parallel with the composer Skriabin's achievement in writing a colour symphony corresponding to his symphony of music. Born in 1875 in a little town near Vilna, the son of a church organist, Churlianis was enabled, with the aid of a local magnate, Prince Ogninsky, to study at the Warsaw and afterwards at the Leipzig Conservatory. Shortly after completing his musical studies he began to paint, and his paintings took the form of harmonies of colour full of musical suggestion. This work attracted the attention of St. Petersburg artists especially of the artist's compatriot Dobuzhinsky. Churlianis moved from Warsaw to St. Petersburg in 1909. His pictures were exhibited in the Russian capital and aroused wonder and a novel kind of pleasure. There was no definite subject in these pictures. No one could possibly say what they were all about, but the remarkable thing was that through the medium of a subtle play of colour, of suns, seas, fragments of rock, rainbows, archways,

shadowy and fantastic figures all mingling in apparent indefiniteness, floating in ethereal transparence, they did actually convey a genuinely musical expression, soothing, delighting, and strangely appealing. Even the profane in matters of art felt the charm and there was no outcry against Churlianis as there was against some of the Russian representatives of post-impressionism who made their appearance about the same time. In St. Petersburg Churlianis began to develop his musical suggestions in more complex imaginative forms, and in the fantastic and dream-like beauty of " The Rider " (on the pale horse) which was exhibited the year before his death, he seems to have united powerful musical suggestiveness with greater boldness and definiteness of pictorial expression. But as was the case with Vrubel, with whom Churlianis has some affinity, for there was a strongly musical element in Vrubel's work, the artist's reason failed to endure the strain of listening to and watching for the beauty on the borderland of two worlds. He died in 1910 in a hospital for the mentally diseased. Churlianis' work is beautiful in itself, and is particularly interesting in its detailed suggestion of correspondences between sound and colour, and in its indication of some more remote and subtle possibilities of expression than those hitherto attained.

A score of other names might be mentioned—Korovin, who like Sérov was one of the pioneers of the new movement in Moscow, Borisov-Musatov, the hunchback dreamer, whose ideal of beauty was the Russian country house with a garden, an avenue, and a bevy of gracious maidens, the later landscape-painters, Rylov and Perepletchikov, Bogaievsky, the genre-painter Kustodiev, who delights in the contrasts and harmonies of colour in Russian village life and many more besides. But the mere recital of the capacities and qualities of these artists would present few novel or distinctive features. Given the principle of fundamental liberty, the example of the leaders of the new movement, and a number of clever painters who are sensitive to all the movements in the West,

a great many good pictures are bound to be produced. The standard is higher in Russia now than it has ever been, and this is true not only of the artists but of the public as well. The Art Schools, the Academy of Arts, the Moscow School of Painting, Architecture and Sculpture train every year scores of young artists, a certain proportion of whom become mere routine workers, while others eagerly press forward, make experiments, form parties, are " left " in the sense of being progressive, or " extreme left " in the sense of returning beyond the primitives, finding inspiration in the art of cave-dwellers, or else becoming Cubists or Futurists. Many go abroad for training in the schools of Paris and Munich and come back full of new ideas and new methods. Foreign influences are strongly felt, particularly the influence of Paris art fashions, but Russian painting has now attained a position of such independence, of such inherent vigour that it easily assimilates foreign influences without any loss to national individuality. The one English artist who has had an appreciable influence in Russia is Aubrey Beardsley. There are many exhibitions every year, in the later part of the winter and in the spring, exhibitions of the Academy and the Union of Artists and of the *Mir Iskusstva* Society, of the New Society of Artists, and of other societies representing various phases of the new movement. The centres of Russian art are St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev, and many of the pictures of the year are often shown in provincial towns after exhibition in the capitals. There are a number of able and discriminating art critics including MM. Benois, Synnerberg, Yaremich, and A. Ivanov in St. Petersburg, and MM. Grabar and Muratov in Moscow. A close connection is now maintained between painting and the theatre on the one hand and painting and literature on the other, and all sides gain from this more intimate contact.

Very striking, too, is the effect of the new movement on public taste. From about 1905 till 1912 the prevailing view on aesthetic matters underwent a complete change. A new

interest was aroused in art for its own sake. The public came to the earlier exhibitions of the new school in a supercilious, sceptical, hostile mood. With the years the work of this school has lost its strangeness and a real sympathy has gradually grown up between public and artists. There is a rapidly increasing demand for cheap and popular books on art, biographies of famous artists, native and foreign, cheap reproductions of well-known pictures, and the like. Picture post cards with reproductions of the best pictures in the annual exhibitions are widely sold. This development of aesthetic interest has had a marked effect on personal habits, on the adornment of the home, and more particularly on dress. In the first revulsion of feeling against the indifference to dress that formerly prevailed the public in the large towns, more especially the women, fell into glaring extremes of bad taste. About the years 1907 and 1908 the display of dress in theatres and concert-halls was simply barbarous in its crude ostentation. Of late years, however, there has been a tendency to discover a new beauty in simplicity, and in quieter combinations of colour, and in public assemblies nowadays the number of people who dress with taste and refinement is steadily gaining ground.

Whither is the new movement tending? Naturally it forms part of a general European movement, and will, in the main, follow the direction that is taken in the West. But will it acquire the national, originative power already displayed by Russian literature and music? Will it, in its turn, exert an influence on the West and send forth fresh impulses leading to new discoveries? In one sense Russian painting has only just begun to be. It has only recently secured a firmly established position and entered broad ways of development. It has been learning the lessons of the West, coming to itself through the adoption of Western craftsmanship, gradually feeling its way towards an expression of the national consciousness. Ivanov and Vrubel have suggested in their work the interesting possibilities of nationalism in art. But the

real possibilities of Russian art, in spite of the historical, ecclesiastical, and landscape painters, in spite of Surikov and Levitan, of Vasnetsov, Roehrich, and Bilibin, have as yet barely been touched upon. The national consciousness has not been plumbed by the methods of painting. And this has lately been illustrated—apart from the extraordinarily suggestive work of Ivanov and Vrubel—in a very curious way. It was only in the winter of 1912–13 that an exhibition of ikons in Moscow made it possible to form something like an adequate conception of the beauty and value of ancient Russian art. Ten or fifteen years ago ancient ikons were valued only by a few amateurs who gradually formed collections, the best of them being that of M. Ostroukhov, the curator of the Tretiakov Gallery. But after the publication of the Tolerance Edict securing liberty of worship to the Old Believers, who have secretly guarded not only the old devotional books, but a large number of ancient pictures, many ikons of unexpected beauty were brought to light. Interest was awakened, collectors made inquiries, and the best of the newly discovered treasure was soon brought up, the prices rising in proportion to the increased demand. The products of the search were exhibited in Moscow during the winter, and constituted a new revelation of the variety, the beauty, and the originality of ancient Russian art. It is true that Russian ecclesiastical art with its frescoes, its mosaics, its ikons, was imported from Byzantium, and that the authors of the earliest work of this kind in Russia were Greeks. But the Russians soon learned to modify Byzantine art after their own fashion, to give it a national character in which were assimilated a variety of influences ranging from Italy in the West to Persia in the East. Novgorod was the earliest home of Russian ecclesiastical art, and the ikons and frescoes of Novgorod are full of force and originality. The work done in Novgorod was continued and developed in the Suzdal region and in Moscow. The best-known of the Suzdal masters is Andrei Rublev, who lived in the fifteenth century, has

been compared with Beato Angelico, and painted the frescoes in the Uspensky Cathedral in Vladimir, and a well-known picture of the Trinity now preserved in the Cathedral of the Troitsko-Sergeievskaia Lavra near Moscow. Russian ecclesiastical art flourished until towards the end of the seventeenth century. Peter the Great's reforms dealt it a fatal blow from which it has not yet recovered, in spite of some recent attempts to bring about its revival.

The recent discovery of the beauty of Russian ikons is characteristic of the stage reached by modern Russian painting. It has just begun to explore the field of its efforts, to appreciate the wealth of suggestion that awaits it. This wealth of suggestion could not have been drawn upon until hand and eye had been trained by Western methods. One may imagine that new discoveries will be made, and that exploration will become effective in the creation of a strong national school of painting, not through slavish imitation of the past, but through fresh suggestion and inspiration drawn from the remains of popular art and from the gradual unfolding of the intricate movement of currents of Byzantine and oriental art across the plain.

Sculpture.

In the matter of sculpture Russia has hardly anything to show. In the eighteenth century there were two or three sculptors of ability; the nineteenth century produced hardly a single sculptor whose name is remembered, although at one time the work of Antokolsky, more particularly his Moses and Mephistopheles, enjoyed a considerable reputation. Recently there have been signs of a revival in sculpture, and at least one Russian sculptor, Prince Paulo Trubetskoy, has produced work that is appreciated outside Russia. His equestrian statue of Alexander III on the square outside the Nicholas Station in St. Petersburg aroused fierce controversy at the time of its unveiling, and it was even proposed that it should be destroyed. The monument still stands, however, and the powerful bronze figure on the heavy horse is suggestive at

once of the bogatyrs who once roamed over the great plain eager for conquest, and of the sheer force and dominance of the autocracy. The statue has nothing of the smooth and insipid elegance that is agreeable to the official eye, but it is the very embodiment of rude power. The one other fine statue of which St. Petersburg can boast, the equestrian statue of Peter the Great in the Senate Square, is the work of the French sculptor Falconet, and dates from the time of Catherine.

CHAPTER X

ARCHITECTURE

Architecture.

In the field of architecture Russia has displayed real originality and can point in the churches of her ancient towns and of various remote villages to a number of masterpieces. There have been relapses and breaches of continuity here too, but the interruptions in development have not been so serious and have not had such lasting effects as has been the case in painting. There is a distinct affinity between certain phases of ancient and certain phases of modern Russian architecture, an affinity independent of any desire to imitate. Perhaps this comparative consistency in architectural development is due to the fact that natural features, scenery, landscape, exercise a more directly determinative influence upon architecture than upon the other arts.

Russian architecture at its best does harmonise in the most striking manner with the Russian landscape. There are no bold crags crowned by beetling fortresses. The *Kreml*, the burg or citadel of the older Russian towns is usually situated on a mound or, at the most, a hill of no great height, and does not stand out aggressively from its natural setting of river and plain. And even where citadels occupy an elevated and conspicuous position as in Kiev and Nizhni-Novgorod, they do not challenge, as the traveller approaches them from the river ; they rather delight by their picturesqueness, and the domination they express over the surrounding plain seems to be rather contemplative than militant. The churches harmonise with the forests in whose shadows they stand, and lying low upon the plain, lacking the stern splendour, the tense aspiration of Gothic cathedrals, they are the fitting temples of a religion that has in it a great deal of warm

humanness; they are havens of brief refuge from the vast expanse with its problems that have no end and no solution.

Practically all that is left of ancient Russian architecture is the churches. But there are many of these, and they are splendid monuments to the genius of their builders. Byzantine models were soon adapted to Russian taste, and it is remarkable that this nationalisation of ecclesiastical architecture by the Russians of the eleventh and twelfth centuries did not lead to degeneration. In fact, judging by the severity of taste displayed in the older churches of Novgorod, the Russians of that period, at any rate in Novgorod, were by no means such barbarians as they are commonly considered to have been. It was in Novgorod that the Russians began to build after their own mind, and the Novgorod of to-day with its scores of white churches by river and lake-side is a veritable museum of Russian ecclesiastical architecture. The sister republic of Pskov also took an active share in the development of this form of art.

The oldest of the Novgorod churches, the Cathedral of St. Sophia, which crowns the Kremlin on the right bank of the river as one approaches from the St. Petersburg side, was erected just before the Norman conquest of England by Greek builders from Byzantium, on the model partly of St. Sophia in Constantinople, partly of the church of the same name erected a few years before that time in Kiev. What most impresses the observer in this ancient church is the arrangement of the five cupolas, the larger dome in the centre being flanked by four others so gently varying in height as to create a delightful effect of free movement tending to a perfect harmony. The interior is that of a typical Byzantine church. The Russian builders who made their appearance in the twelfth century and naturally learned their craft from Greek masters did not attempt to copy St. Sophia. The Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in the Monastery of St. Anthony, and the Church of St. George in the monastery of the same name on Lake Ilmen, which date from the twelfth

century are, in all probability, the work of a Russian architect, and these churches present the characteristic features of Novgorod architecture, namely, severe simplicity, absence of ornamentation, bold, clear outline and a fine sense of the beauty of line and proportion, with walls that depend for their effect on mere massiveness modified by a straight line or a curve in just the right place. In the churches built in Novgorod and the surrounding region during the following centuries by princes, bishops, abbots, and merchants this type of beauty is strictly adhered to. Sometimes the churches are large and imposing, sometimes they are snug and tiny chapels. But their charm lies in their sobriety, their restraint, in the quiet confidence of their builders in the absolute beauty of bold outlines. This severity has a northern almost a Protestant quality, and the Novgorod churches represent what could be made of Byzantine architecture after its possibilities had been considered by men accustomed to see beauty in the mere whiteness and expanse of snow and an infinity of pale sky.

The Kiev region did not succeed in its early period in making an important original contribution to the development of Russian architecture. Its churches were built by Greeks, and the consistent warfare with the nomads culminating in the devastating Tartar invasion prevented the rise of a school of native architects. It was in the Vladimir-Suzdal region and later in Moscow that the work begun in Novgorod was continued. The banks of the Upper Volga from Rybinsk down to near Nizhni-Novgorod are dotted with delightful churches of the Suzdal period. The most beautiful of these churches, that of the Intercession of the Virgin, is on the river Nerli near Vladimir, a simple church with one cupola, amazing in its lightness, its fine proportion, and the gracefulness of its outline. In the Suzdal region the severity of the Novgorod style gradually yielded to a taste for ornament said to be due to French and Italian influences, for the Princes of Vladimir, for all their remoteness,

maintained a certain connection with the West and summoned to their aid Italian masters. Some of the churches in Vladimir and in the quaint little town of Rostov, in the government of Yaroslavl, represent the new developments in ecclesiastical architecture, developments which are reflected again in the churches in the Kremlin in Moscow.

Another very important type of building, the wooden church, had its origin in the northern forests where stone, bricks, and plaster were very difficult to obtain. These wooden churches acquired a style of their own. They were the result of the application of traditional architectural principles to the new material. A considerable number of these wooden churches are still to be seen along the rivers in the governments of Vologda, Olonets, and Archangel. Many devoted, able, and well-known builders must have exercised their wits in devising churches which, built of material so different from that of the mother churches in Novgorod, should yet be worthy of their aim. They did succeed in creating a new and, in many respects, a beautiful type. There are records which show that these buildings awakened ardent popular interest and affection. An interesting story has been handed down of the completion by a "master" unnamed of the wooden Cathedral of the Resurrection in Kola on the White Sea, which was burned down by a British squadron in 1854. When the cathedral was built, declares the legend, the master summoned the people to watch him place the cross in position. He set up the cross in due order, and then descended from the steeple. "Now," he cried, "follow me to the river Tuloma." The people followed him. On the river-bank the master pulled his axe from his belt and hurled it into the river, crying, "There has never been such a master in the world, and now there never will be." After that day he remained deaf to all pleading and never built a church again. There are hints of fierce party struggles and feuds in the matter of architecture in those dense northern forests.

M. Grabar, whose great service it is to have called serious

attention to these neglected wooden churches, points to a group of such churches at Iurom on the river Mezen in the Archangel government, as being particularly imposing on account of the relentless severity of their contours. But this architecture in wood is not only interesting on its own account. It is important as determining a stage in the development of a native Russian style. The necessities of building in wood led to the substitution of steeples usually of octagonal form for the Byzantine cupolas. And the adoption of this type of steeple in the churches of the Moscow region led to the construction of some of the finest monuments of ecclesiastical architecture in Russia, notably the churches in the village of Ostrov and in Kolomenskoe, near Moscow, and much later, towards the end of the seventeenth century to the erection of that marvellously complex and tantalisingly beautiful product of Russian architectural genius, the church at Fili, also in the neighbourhood of Moscow.

But Muscovite architecture was by no means a pure resultant of the Novgorod style and that of the wooden churches of the North. The taste for external ornamentation was freely indulged in. Oriental influences found their way in from the Tartar East and induced in some cases a barbaric profusion of ornament. There were attempts to return to pure Byzantine tradition, and war was declared on the steeple in the name of the cupola. There was a confusion of taste, and that curious Church of St. Basil, near the Kremlin, with its strange jumble of roofs and cupolas, which is so often regarded as typically Russian, really represents a capricious and disorderly mixture of many styles. The persecution of the Old Believers and the prohibition to build churches for the celebration of their ritual caused a serious check in the development of Russian ecclesiastical architecture, and with Peter the Great the period of impetuous absorption of Western influences began. Ecclesiastical architecture has never recovered the position it lost in Russia at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

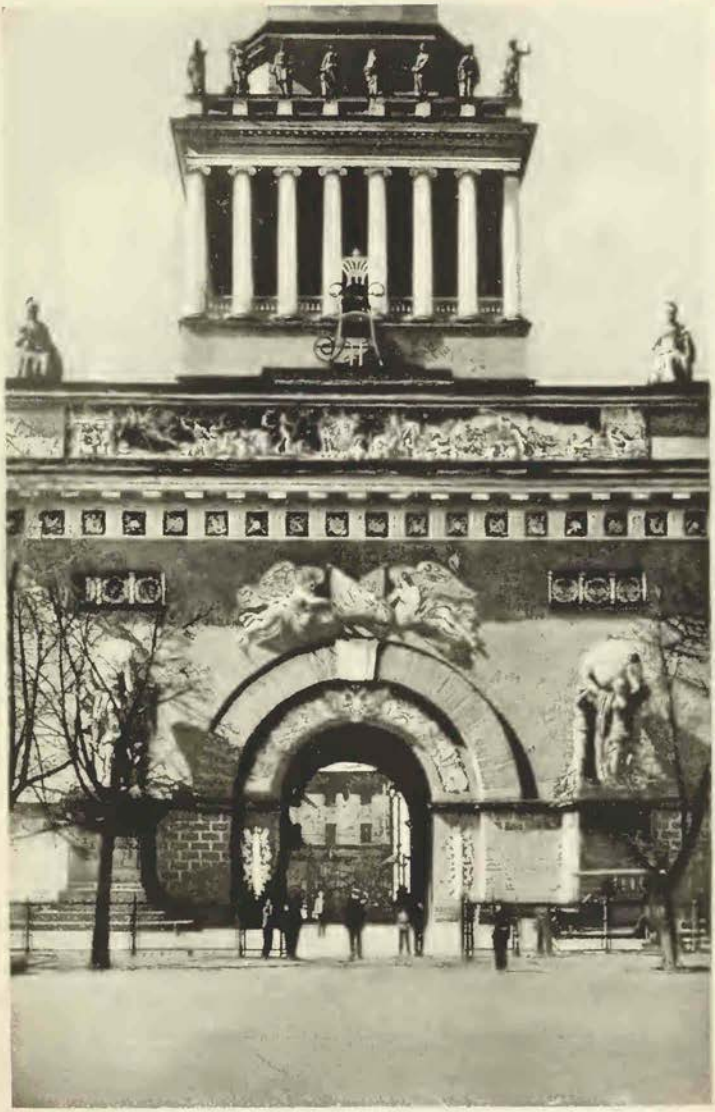
The great builders after Peter were Catherine and Alexander I. Foreign architects were imported, and Russians and foreigners brought up in Russia were sent abroad for training. The most famous of the Russianised foreign architects under Catherine was Rastrelli, who built the Tsarskoe Selo Palace, the Winter Palace in part, and also the fine Smolny convent in St. Petersburg. Catherine had a passion for magnificence. She built palaces herself and insisted on her nobles building them, and the result of her efforts was that splendid edifices with Roman columns arose on estates hundreds of miles distant from any centre of civilisation. The taste of the period was for Roman classic architecture, and Roman columns became the rule in the country houses of the gentry. There is a fine example of a colonade in the Catherine hall of the Taurida Palace built by Starov in 1783. A Scotchman named Cameron designed for Catherine Roman baths and a number of interesting buildings in Tsarskoe Selo and Pavlovsk.

Under Alexander I Russian architecture rose to the highest point it has reached in modern times. It was in this reign that St. Petersburg became a really beautiful city. Most of what delights the eye by its majesty, its splendid proportion in the streets and squares and buildings near the Winter Palace and the Neva owes its origin to the powerful impulse given in this reign. The Kazan Cathedral with its Doric colonnade and the columned portico of the Institute of Mines, both the work of Voronihin, originally a serf of Count Stroganov's, the imposing St. Petersburg Bourse by Tomon, and Zaharov's Admiralty, unique in its combination of grace and strength, are worthy monuments of a brilliant epoch. The impulse given in Alexander's reign continued to operate in the reign of Nicholas I, and expresses itself in such buildings as Rossi's Senate and Alexandra Theatre, and to a much slighter extent in the massive St. Isaac's Cathedral, the work of Monferrant. The architects of the period of Catherine and Alexander I, whatever their origin and their training,

were all caught in a powerful movement which was essentially Russian and which caused them to create out of various elements a style that was distinct from them all.

But in the reign of Nicholas I this thoroughly sound and genuinely national movement was checked by the rise of a pseudo-Russian tendency in architecture. Official nationalism insisted on a return to purely national models, with disastrous results. There was a sudden collapse in taste. A German named Thon covered the Empire with churches in a would-be Russian style, many of which disfigure the landscape to this day. In Moscow where, after the Great Fire, a number of fine private houses had been built by such architects as Bove and Gilardi, the pseudo-national tendency not only marred the quaint harmony of the ancient churches by the erection of such buildings as the Church of the Saviour on the Moskva river; it brought into existence a number of merchants' residences that are depressing in their unintelligent parade of fragments of hopelessly incongruous styles. In St. Petersburg the mere gaudiness of pseudo-nationalism had little place. Dullness prevailed, and street after street of square buildings wholly devoid of any architectural interest whatever bore witness to the failure of genuine national impulse in architecture. This melancholy state of affairs lasted until about the beginning of the present century.

Happily the general revival in art has wrought a change in architectural conditions, and the streets of the capitals are losing their monotony of cheerless fronts. There is no sign of a real revival in ecclesiastical architecture, indeed such a revival would clearly be impossible apart from the return of an age of faith. But a new spirit is making itself felt in the construction of private houses and business buildings. Many new private houses in Moscow reflect a refinement of taste, and a number of handsome bank buildings have been erected in St. Petersburg. In many streets the elegance of the new buildings only serves to emphasise the heavy dullness of those erected in the 'eighties and the 'nineties.



ADMIRALTY ARCH, ST. PETERSBURG

Moscow is fortunate in having very fixed popular habits and clearly-marked tastes of its own, and the very determination of the Muscovites to live in the way they find most comfortable, whatever the aesthetic watchword of the day may be, gives the average Moscow house, hidden away in some narrow winding side street, the charm of sheer naturalness and makes Moscow the most picturesque city in the Empire.

There is one melancholy feature in the history of Russian architecture, and that is the surprising indifference shown until very lately to the relics of the work of devoted artists that lie scattered about over the plain. Even distinguished architects like Guarengi, who was employed by Catherine, have not escaped incomprehensible neglect, and of the magnificent palace he erected for Count Cyril Razumovsky in the Chernigov government only the ruins of a gigantic portico remain. Palaces and country houses are forsaken, rifled and suffered to fall into ruin. Unique specimens of the work of a talented architect are repaired out of all recognition. Quaint churches are pulled down to make room for the futile creations of the pseudo-nationalist schools. Efforts are being made to check this vandalism. The Imperial Archaeological Society maintains a constant search for ancient treasures. But it is the period nearer at hand that suffers most, the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and it seems impossible to hope that the indifference displayed towards the more obscure but valuable work of this period will disappear until the general level of taste has been very considerably raised. Fortunately, there is a very strong movement amongst artists with the object of rescuing what still remains, and an admirable monthly, called *Starie Gody* (The Years of Old), is specially devoted to the work of arousing a real and intelligent interest in all the art of the past from architecture to embroidery.

CHAPTER XI

PEASANTS AND PROPRIETORS

RUSSIA is an agricultural country *par excellence*. Of its 164 millions of inhabitants three-fourths, or over 120 millions, are engaged in agriculture. It is a country of peasants. The prosperity of the Empire, the state of the budget are dependent principally on the state of the crops. Even the political situation is largely dependent on the harvest. A failure of crops means a sudden failure of economic energy, a decline of purchasing power, a weakened budget, widespread discontent, economic and political difficulties at home and abroad. A run of good harvests, on the other hand, makes it possible to tide over a crisis and to recover from heavy strain. The great bulk of the Russian towns are simply market towns for the surrounding agricultural districts. Comparatively few are manufacturing centres, and even in the big cities, where the pulse of administrative, commercial, and industrial life beats strongly, the masses of the population have not definitely severed their connection with agricultural Russia. All the cabmen of the city are peasants, and a heavily-bearded cabman when driving his fare to a bank, a Government office, or a theatre will tell of the wife and children he has left at home somewhere in the government of Rizan, Vitebsk, or Nizhni-Novgorod to cultivate his few acres of land while he earns money in the capital. Most of the workmen in the factories are peasants by origin, and many have some more or less effective claim to land in their native villages.

The Land.

The ties with the country are just as strong at the other end of the social scale. When spring comes and examinations are over, long express trains bear off the families of higher Government officials and deputies to country estates by river-side, in forest or steppe. The capitals are empty in

the summer because of the general exodus. In no country in Europe is there such a complete and prolonged cessation of the hum and bustle of city life as in Russia during the summer months. Slowly and with extraordinary difficulty the big cities are asserting their predominance, are emerging from the market-town condition and becoming complex, modern, urban organisms. But the power they gain during the winter constantly slips away during the long summer vacation, and the political and municipal energy that accumulates between October and June is dissipated between June and October. So great is the fascination of the soil, so directly and irresistibly does the great plain make its appeal.

The Peasantry.

It is the peasant who embodies most distinctly the connection with the soil, and the peasant is the most interesting person in Russia. But there are so many types of peasant, there is such a variety of character and custom that it is difficult to make general statements that will be absolutely true of all. "Not a village but has ways of its own," is a Russian saying. A Siberian peasant on the Yenisei is a very different kind of man from the Tula peasants on Leo Tolstoy's estate of Yasnaia Poliana, and the Cossack of the Don is at once distinguishable from the peasants of the northern governments of Olonets and Archangel. Within the limits of a single government very different types may be met with. In the northern districts of the Chernigov government the peasants have thin, sharp features and speak a dialect of Great Russian. In the southern districts of the same government a dark, broad-faced, broad-shouldered type prevails and the language is Little Russian. Even a single district may display considerable variations. In the Nizhnedievitsky district of the Voronezh government there are three distinct groups, known as Shchekuny, Tsukany, and Galmany, and representing clearly-defined varieties of custom, costume, dialect, and character. The Shchekuny are extremely conservative, ignorant, poor, dirty, and have the reputation of being great

thieves. Their neighbours, the Tsukany, pronounce many words differently, are a trading folk, busy, open, communicative, eager for novelties; their women often wear silk and satin, whereas those of the Shchekuny wear only picturesque, old-fashioned, homespun costumes. The third group again, the Galmany, speak a slightly different dialect, are not averse from innovations, but are laughed at by their neighbours for their big, many-coloured, baggy trousers. In fact the variety of types even within the limits of the Russian nationality is inexhaustible. There are many degrees of prosperity. Side by side with well-to-do peasants there are whole villages that live in wretched poverty. Judging by the dull-eyed, bent-shouldered White Russian peasants one sees amongst the Jews on the railway stations in the governments of Vilna and Minsk, one might easily jump to the conclusion that the White Russian peasants generally were a dead and alive, down-trodden people. Their life is certainly not a cheerful one, but that even the White Russians are not the dumb, driven cattle that many of them seem is shown by a little peasant's paper published in Vilna which prints numbers of stories and a good deal of pretty verse written by peasants, as well as reports of co-operative and educational work undertaken in various villages in the Western Governments. There are three main groups of Russians—White Russians, Little Russians, and Great Russians—and the differences between them are frequently greater than those between an educated Russian and an educated Englishman.

It would be absurd, then, to attempt to describe in a chapter the life of the Russian peasantry as a whole. In the present chapter some account may be given of certain villages on the river Volhov in the Novgorod government, not far from St. Petersburg, it being premised only that a great many of the features noted here are characteristic of all the central and northern governments of European Russia.

The village of Vladimirovo stands on the river bank about ten miles from the St. Petersburg-Moscow railway line, and

about half a mile away from a large country house to which the inhabitants of the village were a little over half a century ago attached as serfs. The village consists of one street, containing about thirty-five cottages and lined with birch trees. Behind the village stretch open fields with a long line of forest in the background. The broad, swiftly-flowing river is a highway in the summer. Steamers maintain communication between the railway station and Novgorod. Great rafts of timber with red-shirted raftsmen drift from the rivers beyond Lake Ilmen down the Volhov to Lake Ladoga and so out to the Neva and St. Petersburg. Barges are towed up early in the season and come down later with timber cut small or with immense stacks of hay. Sometimes the long, yellow barges spread magnificent sails and fly many-coloured flags, and with a fair wind go floating past bright green fields triumphantly up the stream, the steersman dexterously managing the heavy rudder. Then there are curious bulging craft, painted in stripes, with covered decks and sharp stern, big rudder and coarse sails. Such vessels as these come down by various rivers from the distant Borovichi district bringing crude pottery which the boatmen sell in the villages by the way. There are plenty of fish in the river and the peasants cast their nets and catch enough for food and for sale. All through the summer the river is alive with unceasing traffic, though nowadays the trade is nothing like what it was in the Middle Ages when Novgorod was a great commercial republic, and German and Italian merchants were constantly bringing their wares up the Volkov and carrying away rich stores of furs and skins.

But in November the Volhov freezes hard and remains frozen till April. Then all the steamers and boats and barges lie still, and the river becomes simply a smooth, white road over which sleighs go gliding in a long and silent procession. But the peasants of Vladimirovo are not greatly affected by the change. Unlike the peasants of the opposite bank they do not trade and they fish very little. Considering that

they live on a great river and so near the railway they are surprisingly unenterprising.

Where Peasants Live.

Their cottages are built of wood and are unpainted, yellow when new and grey within a year or two; with sloping shingle or thatched roofs and with the gable-end and glazed windows facing the street. The entrance is from the side. You mount a wooden staircase or ladder, push open a door, and find yourself in the upper or main floor of the cottage, the ground floor being mostly used for storage purposes. On the upper floor there may be one, two or three rooms, according to the wealth of the owner and the size of his family. A big, white-washed, brick stove occupies a prominent position in the main room, and on this stove the older people and the children sleep in winter. There is a rough table and a few chairs, a bed, and square, wooden trunks adorned with gaudy pictures; on the walls, cuttings from illustrated papers, in the corners ikons or sacred pictures, and in the middle of the room a child's cot suspended from the ceiling. Pots and pans on the shelves; on the landing at the head of the staircase a barrel of water and a dipper for washing—which is effected not by plunging and rinsing, but by getting another person to pour on the head and hands; then behind the landing lies the hay-loft where half the family sleeps in summer, and under the hay-loft is the stable. Living-rooms and stable are practically under one roof, but men and animals are far apart, and they do not herd together as is the case in Western Ireland, and the cottages are as a rule remarkably clean. Some of the women pile upon shelves and walls an incongruous variety of ornaments such as may often be seen in English farmhouses. Often there are pot-flowers in the windows. On the floor are mats of rough canvas, and occasionally there are family photographs on the walls. There is only one flower garden in the village and that exists because, in the first place, the owner's wife is cook at the manor-house where there is a pretty garden, and in the second place the owner

PEASANTS IN THE HOME

himself is the strong man of the village, and the boy who pulled up his narcissi would know what to expect. Behind some of the cottages are vegetable gardens with a fruit tree or two.

The Bath-house.

At the end of the village and behind many of the cottages are *banias* or Russian bath-houses, which are a necessity of life to the Northern Russians. The *bania* is a low, wooden building, containing a large brick stove on which when it is heated cold water is poured so that the room is filled with steam. There are boilers for hot water. On one side of the room there is a tier of benches, and to lie on the highest bench where the air is hottest is the most effective way of taking the bath. The bath is a combination of perspiring and washing in hot and cold water, and the peasants aid the process by beating themselves with birch twigs. In winter the youths sometimes rush out of the *bania* and roll naked in the snow. Every Saturday the villagers take their bath, and this right through the year, so that it is altogether unfair to describe the peasants of Northern and Central Russia as being indifferent to cleanliness. On the contrary they are exceptionally scrupulous in this respect.

In the centre of the village is a shop kept by a widow-woman, where sugar, tea, sweetmeats, cotton-fabrics, and a score of odds and ends are sold at a high price, often on credit. There is a tiny chapel or rather a shrine in which services are rarely held. The parish church is several miles away, but the church of the neighbouring parish is just across the river and the Vladimirovo peasants as a rule go there when they go to church at all.

The Village School.

Outside the village is a big, two-storied school building where about sixty children from all the villages in the neighbourhood are taught the elements. The girls are taught sewing, and there is a carpentry class for the boys, with a special teacher and a well-furnished shop. This school, which owes its existence to the neighbouring landowner, is unusually large and well

equipped. Very often in the villages the school is held in an ordinary peasant's cottage, roughly adapted for the purpose. The Vladimirovo school is now maintained by the Ministry of Education. There are two teachers, a man and a woman, and the priest from over the river gives religious instruction. The only children's festival in the year is the Christmas tree which is usually provided by the landowner's family. Then the little boys and girls march round the fir-tree in a stumbling, hot, disorderly procession and gaze in wonder at all the marvels agleam in the candlelight amongst the dark branches. They sing lustily the songs they have been taught for the occasion and are full of struggling, despairing eagerness when the time for the distribution of presents comes. On the whole, the children live a jolly life. There are so many of them and they are always trooping about the village street together, the little girls arm-in-arm and sometimes singing in imitation of their big sisters, and the little boys striding about barefoot contemptuous of mere girls with hands deep in the pockets of long, baggy, patched trousers, or else racing off at full speed when big people find them robbing birds'-nests or getting within dangerous reach of forbidden fruit trees. In winter the most absorbing care of the mothers is to see that the children are warmly clad, but in the summer the boys go mostly bareheaded and their hair is bleached to a uniform white. There is no end to the children, six, seven, or eight being quite a normal number in a family, and it is a relief to the mother if a girl of eleven or twelve can go out as nurse to a neighbour for her keep, or if one of the small boys is made a shepherd lad. The bigger boys help their fathers, and the bigger girls may go out to service or else find work in the factory down the river. But in any case it is not easy to make ends meet, and the peasants frankly admit that it is not an unmixed evil if one of the children dies.

The problem of "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" is for the

THE CHILDREN OF THE VILLAGE

peasants a tolerably simple one, especially as far as eating is concerned. The staple food is home-made rye bread, which is called black, but it is not coal-black, as most of us imagined when we read German stories in our childhood, but dark brown. This bread is pleasant to the taste and very nourishing, but to assimilate it a long training is necessary. It seems ill adapted to English digestions, and the older peasants often suffer violent aches and pains as a result of its use. Black bread is the staple, and the peasant can do an enormous amount of field-work on black bread alone. But this fact is not an absolute argument in favour of vegetarianism, for as soon as a peasant goes to work in a factory he finds that his strength fails him unless he eats meat; and even the workmen in a brick-kiln near the village declare they cannot do without flesh food. The peasant eats meat rarely, as a rule only on festival days. But every day there is a meatless soup of some kind, most frequently *shchi*, in which preserved cabbage or sauerkraut is the chief ingredient. Potatoes are eaten as a kind of sauce or condiment to bread; altogether the chief art in eating is to find ways of consuming the largest possible quantity of bread. Barley and buckwheat porridge is frequently eaten. For special occasions the women bake *pirogi* or pasties filled with cabbage, more rarely with rice, and still more rarely with meat. On their simple but monotonous diet the peasants seem to thrive fairly well, although digestive complaints are not infrequent.

Rustic Food.

To drink there is plain water and tea. Every peasant cottage has its *samovar* or tea-urn, and tea is drunk regularly, very weak and very pale, without milk. In drinking tea a small lump of sugar is made to go a long way; a tiny morsel is bitten off and held between the teeth and gradually melts as the tea is sipped. Peasants eat slowly and with great decorum, crossing themselves before and after meals.

But there is another beverage to which the Russian peasant is greatly addicted, and that is *vodka*, a spirituous liquor as

innocent-looking as water, but a most potent kind of brandy. On the whole, the peasant does not drink such an enormous amount of *vodka* as is supposed. The average consumption of alcohol per head is less in Russia than in Great Britain. But the peasant drinks at intervals. He remains sober all the week and celebrates Sundays and festival days by consuming enough *vodka* to raise his spirits; a very small quantity of *vodka* suffices to intoxicate him. On special holidays such as the festival of the patron saint of the village, there is heavy drinking, often leading to fierce quarrels in which knives are used, and sometimes murders are committed. Vodka-selling is the monopoly of the State. All over the country there are Government brandy-shops, in which the salesman or saleswoman hands out through a hole in a netting like that of a telegraph office bottles from long rows of shelves like those in a dispensary, for consumption off the premises. There is no State brandy-shop in Vladimirovo, but during one year there was a great deal of illicit grog-selling, and that was a bad time for the village, for the men were always drinking and their earnings melted away. Then the women revolted and took matters into their own hands. They went about the village and broke the windows in the cottages of the sly grog-sellers and made them give up the trade. Only one they left in peace. She was a widow, and they gave her permission to sell *vodka* until she could save enough to buy a cow. After this revolt the peasants were compelled to make journeys to other villages when they needed brandy. The women in this district do not drink, but that is not the case everywhere. In some of the districts around Moscow the women drink at least as much as the men and make a boast of doing so. And the nearer peasants are to the cities or to manufacturing districts the more they drink and the more demoralised they become. Sometimes a revulsion of feeling occurs, and in Vladimirovo several of the hardest drinkers occasionally go to the priest and take a vow not to drink, or in other words sign the pledge for six months or

more. And although they are by no means pious men they keep their vow.

Generally speaking, there is much more drinking now than there used to be. Increased prosperity means increased drinking. The more money earned the more *vodka* is consumed. The revenue from the State monopoly has now reached the astonishing sum of 800 million roubles (over £80,000,000) per annum. And closely connected with the increase of drinking is the spread in late years of what is known as "hooliganism" in the villages. Hooliganism is simply purposeless rowdyism and crime, robbery and destruction for sheer destruction's sake. The old customs, the old etiquette and decorum are losing their hold, the *naïveté* and simplicity of former days are swiftly disappearing; the political upheaval has shaken the old faith, but owing to its failure to effect real reforms and to establish liberty it has given little opportunity for working in new ways. On the contrary, it has led to embitterment and a growth of espionage and to the spread of a brooding suspicion. All this strongly affects the younger generation and encourages the growth of the brutal instincts which find expression in the increase of wanton crime in the country districts. Hooliganism is, in fact, one aspect of that state of affairs another side of which is reflected in the many sensational and vulgar crimes committed in the higher circles of society during recent years. Hooliganism and the increased consumption of vodka again largely explain each other.

Drinking.

The question of dress in the country is at once simpler and more difficult than it used to be. In former days all garments were home-made, the fashions remained unchanged for generations and valuable costumes were handed down from mother to daughter and long kept in the family as heirlooms. In the remoter districts, where the influence of the cities is not strongly felt, the older costumes are still worn, and often the women's costumes are complicated and beautiful, with

Dress.

gorgeous headgear and veils and rich adornment of silver coins of various times and peoples. Occasionally, as in some villages on the Gulf of Finland near St. Petersburg, the old costumes are retained in defiance of the factories and proudly worn on Sundays. But in Vladimirovo the modern spirit rules. Of the typical, red, close-fitting woman's dress known as the *sarafan*, which is eagerly sought after as a curiosity, not a specimen is now to be found in the village; probably all have been cut up or worn to shreds. There are a few spinning-wheels and rough hand-looms, and the women weave a kind of course canvas and linen table-cloths and towels from the flax which is one of the staple crops in the district. Some of the women embroider for sale. But most of the clothing material comes from the factories. About once a month a Tartar comes round with a waggon full of cotton fabrics, and of these the peasants buy what they need for their garments. The women make their own and the children's clothing and also the men's shirts or blouses. In the autumn a tailor goes from cottage to cottage and makes rough suits and overcoats for the men. There is a felt-maker, too, who makes the round of the villages and beats out felt for winter boots. Very often nowadays the men buy their clothing ready-made, and the boys have to be content with more or less clumsy adaptations of their father's or elder brothers' garments.

In the district here described, and this is true of most districts near the main highways, the women dress in cotton skirts and blouses, and on their heads wear coloured cotton kerchiefs. The men wear a kind of rough European dress —German dress they call it here—with high boots and cotton blouses, known as Russian shirts, and in colder weather double-breasted coats buttoned up to the neck. Their headgear is usually a soft peaked cap. On Sundays the younger men flaunt shining top-boots and gaudily embroidered shirts. The younger women are quickly adapting town fashions which they probably bring home from the factory down the

river where so many of them are employed. The daughter of a comparatively poor peasant will walk on Sundays in elaborate dresses of a town pattern; none of them dare yet do such an unheard-of thing as wear a hat in the village, though probably they have hats stored away. But it is to be feared that some of them have already gone so far as to complete their transformation by wearing false hair. *O tempora, O mores!*

Village Life.

The inhabitants of Vladimirovo are neither well-to-do nor very poor. They are not geniuses and are not enterprising, but they are no fools, and they are not stubbornly conservative. They have no pronounced political opinions of any kind, take things very much as they come, rarely read newspapers, although during the war and the revolutionary years some of them went so far as to subscribe to the cheaper journals. Few of the men read books, but sometimes the younger women and girls read the story-books to be found in the school library. Nearly all the men have served in the army, but it is difficult to see what trace army life has left on them. Several served in the Japanese War and took part in some of the fiercest engagements, but they tell of their experiences in a humdrum way without the slightest display of emotion. One snub-nosed, broad-cheeked peasant, Alexei, received for his services in the war a premium of £50, which he spent on building a new cottage. He was also appointed military instructor in the school under the new boy-scout system, and aroused the merriment of the whole countryside by his attempts to drill rebellious schoolboys into the proper use of wooden guns. There are hardly any among the villagers who remember the days of serfdom. An old forester and his wife can sometimes be induced to recall the time when they were serfs. But they will not admit that there was any profound and essential difference between then and now, except that in the old days a peasant was bound to be more industrious, which they are inclined to consider was rather

a good thing. A former blacksmith, Gerasim, now dead, used to tell with pride that he was rarely flogged and enjoyed the favour of his master, who got him a very pretty bride, naturally also a serf, from another estate of his about twenty miles away. Gerasim fell in love with her at first sight, but he seems to have been a dull fellow and by no means handsome, and the girl cried her eyes out at being compelled to marry him. There was no help for it. It was the master's will, and they were the master's property. But for months after the marriage the bride would not look at Gerasim and turned her back on him every time he approached her. Of the stern master who effected this marriage and who lived in the early part of the last century it is related, amongst other things, that during haymaking and harvest he used to stand on a hill and watch the work through a telescope; any peasant who showed signs of slackness he immediately had flogged. But the pre-emancipation period with its three days a week of compulsory labour on the big estate, the constant floggings, the purchase and sale of men and women, is a fading memory now. The younger generation has hardly an idea of what serfdom meant.

The effects of serfdom linger on, however, in Vladimirovo in a very curious way. Most of the peasants are very good fellows, not idle, and some of them witty and original. But on the whole they are strangely flaccid and lacking in initiative, and this is characteristic of most of the villages for a considerable distance along the left bank of the river. On the right bank a very different spirit is manifested. Just opposite Vladimirovo is a large village called Vysoko, which the German traveller Olearius notes having visited during his journey up to Novgorod in the seventeenth century. Here the peasants are much more prosperous, are more industrious, better dressed, have better houses, are more wide-awake and alert, more receptive of new ideas, more enterprising in every way. The chief explanation of the difference is a very simple one. Along the left bank the peasants were

the serfs of private landowners. On the right bank they were the serfs of the State, which meant that after the payment of a heavy tax a great deal of room was left for individual initiative. Then there is one other important fact that accounts for the difference in character. The villages on the right bank are the remains of the military settlements founded by Count Arakcheiev early in the nineteenth century. Arakcheiev was a fierce disciplinarian, and applied martial law to field-work and to every detail of life in the settlements. With the help of the cat-o'-nine-tails he got a fine highroad lined with birch trees built from Gruzino some distance down the river to Staraia Rusa beyond Lake Ilmen. The discipline was intolerable, and led to a terrible revolt which was ferociously quelled. But the sense of order and duty inculcated in the settlements in Arakcheiev's stern days has left its impress on the character of the inhabitants of the right bank until now. At the present time the difference between the two banks makes itself continually felt, and while the left bank on the whole remains passive and is sunk in routine, the right bank is undergoing some very remarkable changes. But before describing these changes it is necessary to give some account of the prevailing system of peasant land tenure and of the *mir* or village commune.

The Commune.

In Vladimirovo, which is a small village, the commune exists in a simple form. All the peasants of the village hold their land in common, and there is no rented or bought land to complicate ownership rights. Fifty years ago at the time of the emancipation the Vladimirovo peasants received a portion of the land of the estate to which they had been attached. This land was in effect purchased by them, but the purchase was made through the State, the peasants gradually extinguishing their debt in the form of annual redemption payments which constituted an extra tax. The State in its turn compensated the landlord by means of a complex financial operation. The result as far as the Vladimirovo peasants were

concerned was that they secured in all about 630 acres of land. The way they put it is that they received 5½ desiatins per soul, a "soul" then being a male householder. At the time of the emancipation there were forty-six souls, so that the total amount was 253 desiatins. This land was divided up amongst the members of the community in such a way that each received his share of forest, meadow, and field. But the system of allotment is a very curious one. If each peasant had his lot in one compact area he could deal with it fairly easily. This is not the case. Justice requires that good and bad soil, forest and bog, the far lands and the near lands should be as nearly as possible equally apportioned. So the land is cut up into narrow strips, and these strips cause considerable confusion, especially if they happen to become entangled with Crown lands or with landlords' land or land that has been bought or rented by individual peasants. This overlapping of strips is one of the most perpetually irritating of land problems in Russia.

In Vladimirovo, however, this particular difficulty is felt less acutely than in other villages, because the peasants' land is fairly clearly marked off from that of the estate on one side, and from that of the neighbouring village community on the other. And, indeed, the Vladimirovo peasants got such a small share of land that they have little difficulty in managing it. Every peasant knows his lot though it is not divided from others by fences or ditches, and disputes are rare. The land is owned legally by the whole community, and each member holds his land only in virtue of his membership. This does not mean, however, that all members of the community are equalised in the matter of wealth. Even if they were equalised at the beginning the lapse of years makes them unequal. The growth of population causes changes. Some families increase, others diminish and disappear. One family has many sons, each of whom has a right to land. Another family has many daughters who are married off and lost to their father's house. Sometimes if there are several

A NORTH RUSSIAN VILLAGE

males in the family, some go to work in the towns or on distant estates and leave their father or brothers to work the land which in time practically passes into the hands of the workers. Some families are industrious and enterprising, others indolent and ready to forego their rights. In fact, there is no end to the possibilities of inequality. There exists a legal corrective to the growth of irregularities in the form of a repartition which may be undertaken by the community at certain intervals. But the peasants of Vladimirovo have not once effected a repartition since the emancipation. They seem to have thought it hardly worth while. Part of the surplus of population brought by the years has gradually drifted away and left the community very little larger than it was at the time of the emancipation. And there is a natural disinclination to upset established relationships. But a considerable disproportion now exists. Some families are richer and some are poorer. Some hold the share of two souls or more, others have only half a soul, and some have practically nothing more than the tiny plot of land on which their cottage stands.

The communal land was, until a few years ago, inalienable. It could not be sold or leased, and every peasant so long as he was a member of the commune and had not forfeited his rights had a certain safe and sure anchorage to which he might return when life in the world outside buffeted him too severely. The commune is a kind of mutual aid society, and the habit of united action ingrained as a result of centuries of communal life is one of the most marked features of the Russian peasants' character. Living together in a village, not scattered about on separate lots of land, possessing strongly developed social instincts, they are communicative, gossipy, given to lending and borrowing, observant of custom, retentive of tradition. And the communal system largely explains the extreme conservatism of the Russian peasant in methods of cultivation. It is not easy to effect innovations when, after all, your land is not your

own and the other members of the community resent the implied aspersion on the traditional methods. The peasants of Vergezha and all the other peasants in the neighbourhood, might get very much more out of their land than they do. With intensive culture a good deal might be done even with thirteen acres. There are, in fact, German and Lettish colonists in the district who prosper greatly on land of the same quality, but the Russian peasants have not shown the slightest disposition to adopt their methods.

The affairs of the community are managed by a *skhod*, or mote of which all the adult males are members. The *skhod* annually selects a *starosta* or elder, who on occasion summons the men for the transaction of necessary business by walking through the village, striking each cottage with a rod and crying, "*Na skhod!*" (To the mote!). In the exercise of his duties the elder is assisted by another peasant who acts as policeman or *desiatnik*. The chief business of the starosta is to collect the taxes, to note their payment in a register and to convey them to the centre of the canton, or volost, a few miles away. The village mote discusses all matters that concern the whole village; the hire of a shepherd for the cattle during the summer months, the amount to be paid to the neighbouring landlord for the right of pasturing the herd on his estate, and many other such details of the communal life. Sometimes bigger questions are discussed. The peasants of the village of Kurino, up the river, decided some years ago after long discussion to acquire, through the Peasant's Bank, a Government institution which facilitates the purchase of land by the peasantry, a considerable portion of a neighbouring estate. The question of the interest to be paid to the Bank is now one of the many questions discussed by their mote. More general questions are occasionally touched upon. The mote may pass a resolution (called a *prigovor*, or sentence) urging the removal of an unpopular school teacher or priest, or the retention of one whose dismissal is threatened. During 1905 and 1906 many

communes discussed political questions, and a large number of peasants' resolutions were sent to the First Duma demanding a great variety of reforms, chiefly concerning land-tenure. Discussions of this kind have, however, now been pretty thoroughly checked by police measures.

For the peasants are not allowed to act independently. They are under constant tutelage. All the villages in a given area called a canton or volost converge on an administrative centre in the chief village of the canton which has a cantonal mote and a cantonal court under the presidency of a *starshina* or elder. The books of the canton are kept by a *pisar* or secretary who is also the mainspring of the activity of the court. In the cantonal court cases are tried by customary law, but these courts are notorious for their corruption, and it is a common saying among the peasantry that a gift of a bottle of beer to the *starshina* and a rouble to the *pisar* is sufficient to secure judgment in the desired direction. The *uriadnik*, the lowest representative of the Government rural police, lives in the cantonal centre.

The canton contains another personage of great importance to the peasantry. It will be noted that the whole organisation of the canton is concerned only with the peasants. The gentry and other inhabitants of the area are not included in the administrative arrangements. The peasants are, indeed, regarded as being, as a class, in the position of minors, and this fact is emphasised by the appointment of special officials, known as *Zemskie Nachalniki*, Rural Overseers or Wardens of the Peasantry, whose duty it is to exercise a general oversight over the peasants in their respective districts each of which may include two or three cantons. Usually a prominent landowner of the neighbourhood is appointed Warden, and care is taken that his views shall be agreeable to the Government. The Warden has judicial rights with power to fine and imprison, and minor criminal cases are tried before him. If he is politically active and heavy-handed he may make things very unpleasant for the peasants, and

as an institution the wardenship is unpopular. But the peasants regard the Warden as the chief authority in the district, and their favourite threat is to appeal to the Zemsky. Thus Anna, the wife of Nikolai the forester's son in Vladimirovo, had endless trouble with her husband who had not only beat her, which would be considered a normal and a natural thing and a sign of affection, but openly insulted her, and although he earned a great deal of money practically starved her and the children. Several times she retired to her father's house to parley from there, but Nikolai never kept his promises, and finally she went off to lay all her troubles before the Warden. Kusha, a widow in a village down the river, had an incorrigible son of sixteen who beat her, turned her out of her own house and threatened to kill her. She, too, applied to the Warden and had the boy put in prison.

The Zemstvo.

Calling the Warden the Zemsky, as they do, the peasants continually confuse him with an institution of quite a different character, the Zemstvo or District and Provincial Council. The government, or province, is divided into uiezdy or districts, and the districts into cantons. But the Zemstvo organisation does not reach farther down than the district, and is not suffered to penetrate into the canton, since it represents local government by all classes in conjunction, modern ideas, the elective principle and a variety of other features distasteful to the bureaucracy. The work of the Zemstvo must, however, touch the canton at certain points. The Zemstvo maintains a certain number of schools, which are usually the best schools in the government. It keeps roads and bridges in repair, and a very important part of its work is the provision of medical aid. For this purpose it maintains doctors at various stations, and these doctors have a hard life, the area they have to cover in all weathers, winter and summer, being sometimes equivalent to an English county, while railways are few and roads are often excessively bad. The Zemstvo

doctor has been admirably described in Chehov's stories. To aid the doctor in his work the Zemstvo maintains in the larger villages roughly qualified male practitioners, called *feldshery*, or women practitioners called *feldsheritsy*, who deal with the simpler cases. There are small Zemstvo hospitals which are often forty or fifty miles apart. In certain governments such as Kostroma and Voronezh, the Zemstvo has established admirable sanitation systems for the speedy provision of medical aid, the effective prevention of disease and the instruction of the peasantry in elementary health principles. The characteristic feature of the medical aid given by the Zemstvo is that it is free of charge. It should be added that the principle of free medical aid for all who need it is firmly established throughout Russia, and is systematically put into practice in the cities.

The agronoms, or agricultural experts, are also maintained by the Zemstvo and give advice to the peasantry gratis, maintain experimental stations, and generally do what they can to modernise methods of cultivation, without achieving, however, the striking success that might have been anticipated. In the district here reviewed there is an agronom who lives on the railway line at Chudovo, and has opened there on behalf of the Zemstvo a depot of agricultural machinery, the demand for which is steadily growing amongst the peasantry. The Zemstvo keeps regular statistics of the population of the government and its economic condition, and for this purpose employs at given intervals a whole army of statisticians, the greater number of whom are students of the Universities or technical schools. In Zemstvos that are more active and progressive than that of Novgorod other branches of work are undertaken. The Tver Zemstvo, for instance, has an excellent fire-insurance system, and in Moscow and a number of other governments the Zemstvo has paid great attention to the conservation and revival of those cottages industries which formerly constituted the chief occupation of the peasants during the winter months, and the products of which

have aroused enthusiastic interest at exhibitions in Paris and London.

The peasants have a voice in the Zemstvo. There is a limited number of peasant members in the District Council, but the landed gentry predominate. And it is certain that most of the peasants of such a village as Vladimirovo have not the faintest knowledge of their direct share in the Zemstvo organisation. For them the benefits conferred by the Zemstvo are sent down upon them by the vague, indefinite mass of powers and authorities which regulates all the details of their life. Zemsky and Zemstvo, the government Warden and the local government council, are for most of them very much the same thing.

The last few years, however, have shaken the peasant out of his traditional attitude and made him ready for change. And if the inhabitants of Vladimirovo and the left bank of the Volkov generally are little disposed to question the established order of things and to reach out after innovations, the inhabitants of the right bank are, as has been pointed out, in a different mood. There a process of transformation is at work, a process which means that in twenty years' time the villages affected will be hardly recognisable.

Life in Dubki.

Some twenty miles up the river Volhov towards Novgorod lies a large village called Dubki, which a few years ago was in no way different from the other villages along the river. Now it has become a centre of progress, the scene of experiments that cannot fail to exert a great influence on the whole countryside. During the revolutionary period several young men in this village, like other young men along the river, and hundreds of peasants all over Russia, became infected with new ideas. They decided that they were Socialists—they were not very sure of what kind, whether Social Revolutionaries or Social Democrats, but at any rate they were very "left." Two or three of them fell into prison, as peasants who were

ZEMSTVO STATISTICIANS AMONG THE PEASANTRY

keen on politics were apt to do. In prison they talked with educated Socialists, borrowed books from them, and came out of prison more determinedly Socialist than before. When the reaction came they lost interest in general politics, and in any case they were far less interested in ministries and parliaments than in the practical task of improving conditions in their own countryside. They found that there were a great many things they might actually do without waiting for a general social transformation. In the first place they became co-operators, and here they found themselves in line with a movement which during the last few years has progressed in Russia by leaps and bounds. Co-operation appealed to their Socialist feeling, proved in practice eminently workable in the form of a co-operative store, and, moreover, it came naturally to the villagers, seeming as it did to them merely a new development of the communal principle to which they were accustomed. Other co-operative societies were started in villages along the river Volhov, and although the authorities at first frowned on the enterprise and held the initiators under suspicion they contented themselves with keeping out as far as possible the element of political opposition and suffered the movement to grow. In Dubki as in hundreds of other villages the co-operative store has greatly diminished the power of the village tradesman, who by his exorbitant charges and his methods of giving credit accumulates property at the expense of the weaker villagers and is known commonly as the *kulak* or fist. Moscow is the centre of the co-operative movement in Russia. The Co-operative Union, or Wholesale Society, is growing strong and influential, has a membership of 1,000 societies, and an annual turnover of £80,000, publishes several periodicals and a great many books and pamphlets, and the organisers as a rule take great care that Rochdale principles are strictly observed. The total number of co-operative societies in Russia is over 16,000. The movement has assumed such dimensions that co-operators in such a village as Dubki are already lifted beyond the

stage of lonely pioneer struggling and are strong in the support of a great organisation.

The word co-operation in its Russian form is hardly used by the inhabitants of the village. The store they call a *potrebilka*, which means simply a shop for consumers, and the union they call by the very familiar Russian name *artel* which stands for an institution as characteristically Russian as the *mir* or commune. An artel is a kind of mutual liability association. Workmen frequently form artels as a guarantee against loss. The porters on railway stations are organised in artels, so are the floor-polishers, so are the messengers in red caps who stand at the street corners in the cities, so are the messengers in banks and business houses. The artel is liable for all its members, so that if one of them steals or injures property the artel has to make the loss good. The members of the artels pool their money and share gains as well as losses. Peasants from a village community often form themselves into an artel when they go to work at a distance, and local patriotism seems to form the basis of membership in the big artels in the cities, the men of Yaroslav forming one artel the men of Kostroma another, and so forth. The name *artel* is now widely used in the co-operative movement, and in this way a link of continuity is maintained with traditional Russian forms of association.

The co-operative store did not satisfy the ambition of the enterprising young men of Dubki. They were eager to engage in co-operative production. But for this capital was necessary, and the whole of their small funds had been exhausted in setting the store going, and in connection with the store a tea-room with a gramophone. They learned, however, that the Government had set apart a considerable sum of money to be advanced to peasants in small sums through the Peasants' Bank. It was not very pleasant for these young Socialists of yesterday to make application to the Government, but they were eager to work and they swallowed their scruples. The officials in Novgorod in their turn were

suspicious, but intermediaries were found, difficulties smoothed over, and the Dubki peasants secured enough money to start a co-operative butter factory with. The interest of peasants in the surrounding villages was aroused, three creameries were established, and now the factory is flourishing and sending large quantities of butter every week to a co-operative store in St. Petersburg. And this butter factory, again, is only one of hundreds that have sprung up in various parts of Russia during the last few years. Formerly peasants when they kept cows used the milk chiefly for rearing calves which were sold to the butchers. The market for milk products was a poor one, and it is still much poorer than it might be, chiefly because of the defectiveness of means of communication. Moreover, the peasants rarely knew how to make butter or cheese fit for the market. The Dubki peasants and others in the neighbourhood had to learn, and instructors came down and gave lectures and practical advice, and the wideawake young pioneers read and observed unceasingly.

Then their horizon was broadened by an unlooked-for event. One of them was sent abroad to study. There exists in St. Petersburg a society called *Zerno*, or "The Grain," devoted to agricultural improvement, and one of the good things this society does is to send promising young peasants to learn farming conditions in Western European countries. Occasionally its protégés are sent to Denmark, but since the society has a conservative and Slavophil tinge it prefers sending them to Slavonic countries. The young peasant chosen from Dubki was sent to Bohemia, where he remained for over a year working as a farm labourer. He soon learned the language, was keenly interested in all he saw, and since the Bohemian farmers are very up to date, he brought back with him to Dubki a host of new ideas about the rotation of crops, cattle-feeding, co-operation, the treatment of milk and butter and so forth. Luckily instead of abandoning his village and seeking employment as a steward on a big estate, as peasants

of his knowledge and ability do most frequently, he remained in Dubki and threw himself into all its enterprises, so that the whole village gained by his interesting experience.

But it was not only the agricultural methods of the Bohemian farmers that had impressed Akeksei, the student from Dubki. He had been greatly struck by the swift pulsation of their social life, their choral societies, their reading rooms and lecture halls, their ordered festivals and, above all, by their strong national feeling. Some of the lessons he learned he tried to put into practice in his native village, and now the Dubkians are building a house, the lower story of which is to be used as a fire-brigade station, while the upper story will serve as a hall for lectures, choral festivals and dances. To inculcate patriotism was not so easy. Pride in the glories of the ancient city of Novgorod was stamped out long ago, and the peasants of the district are perfectly indifferent to their past and almost devoid of local patriotism. But Akeksei succeeded in doing the incredible. He induced a large company of his fellow villagers to make an excursion two hours' distance up the river to Novgorod, under the shadow of which they had lived all their lives, and to visit the old churches with a teacher who explained the historical associations. Nothing could have been more clearly indicative of a change of temper than this excursion.

The co-operative work in the village, passing as it did under the familiar name of artel, might be regarded as a new development of communal methods. But another change took place in the village that involved a startling breach with communal tradition. The commune was broken up. Dubki was caught in the sweep of the private ownership movement due to the operation of a law promulgated first of all by Imperial decree at the instance of Stolypin after the dissolution of the Second Duma in 1907, and modified and developed by the Third Duma. This law annuls the obligatory character

The Break-up of the Commune.

of the village commune and provides that any peasant who so desires may secede, that is, he may claim as his own private property the share of the communal lands that falls to his lot. The principle is simple enough, but its elaboration and adaptation to general property laws and to the administrative system has involved a large amount of cumbrous legislation, while the execution of the law has been attended with great difficulties. Many progressive Russians have long felt that the communal system hampered individual initiative and was a bar to development, and have urged a transition to private property. But the new law had the disadvantage of being passed by the bureaucracy at a time of reaction when great embitterment prevailed in the country. And this circumstance combined with a lingering Populist idealisation of the commune as a distinctively national and Socialist institution made the intelligentsia and the Opposition generally regard Stolypin's action with great distrust. Thus the working of the new law instead of taking the form of a unanimous and national effort, like the execution of the agrarian reforms connected with the emancipation of the peasantry, was left for the most part to the bureaucracy and suffered in consequence. But the fact that the work was real and new and interesting work attracted many of the ablest of the younger men who had only recently completed their education and entered the Government service, and the difficult transition to a new form of tenure was, in many instances, effected with tact and skill. The opinions of experts vary greatly as to the results hitherto attained. Frequently intimidation and force have been employed by officials in order to compel the peasants to abandon the commune. Applications for liberation from the commune have in many places led to fierce conflicts among the peasantry, and when a whole village abandons the communal system, the weaker peasants frequently sell their fragment of land, drink the proceeds and go under. But on the other hand a great many cases are on record where the break-up of the

commune has led to rapid economic progress. In Dubki, at any rate, the result has been wholly successful.

For the working of the law each government has a separate organisation under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. A Land Commission is established, composed of officials and country gentlemen, and this Commission investigates the possibilities of putting the law into force in the government, marks out likely villages, sounds the peasants and takes measures to make the provisions of the law generally known. In practice it is found better for whole villages to divide up than for individual peasants to go out of the commune. When a commune wishes to divide up it " composes a sentence," in other words passes a resolution to that effect, and officials of the Ministry of Agriculture are immediately sent down to examine local conditions and to give advice as to the best way of carrying out the scheme. Then land-surveyors go to work, the communal land is divided up fairly according to the claims of each householder, the changes are registered, and thereafter he is free to cultivate, sell, or lease his land at his own pleasure.

In Dubki under the old system the peasants suffered greatly from the endless overlapping of strips of land. There was little pleasure in farming when a man's land was scattered about in narrow strips over a considerable area, and there was no solid satisfaction in ploughing even with a new steel plough when a strip was only a few furrows wide. But in the transition to private ownership these drawbacks have been removed. Every peasant now has his land in one or at the most three places, and can concentrate his energies in one spot with a sense that he has breathing space. All the peasants of Dubki are very well content with the new arrangement, the more so that they have been freed from the drawbacks of the old system without too violent a break with their regular habits. There are two ways, under the new law, in which peasants may pass into the private ownership stage. They may go out " on to *hutora*," that is to say,

they may leave the village, build a cottage on their allotment of land, and there live the solitary life of a farmer. Or else they may go out "on to *otruba*," that is, they continue to live in the village, going out daily to cultivate their land. The choice is often determined by the convenience or inconvenience of access to the allotment. Some of the allotments lie at a considerable distance from village, river, or road, and the impossibility of providing allotments that shall be equally convenient of access for all the villagers is one of the causes that most frequently deters communes from dividing up. The villagers of Dubki having divided up preferred to remain in the village. Their reason for doing so was very simple and human. "It would be very dull and lonely," they declared, "to be living scattered about on farms." So they continue to live their friendly village life with its wealth of new interests and new enterprises and seem to be perfectly satisfied with the choice they have made. They are prospering and putting money into their farms and improving cultivation, and they are doing something to ward off some of the dangers that come with prosperity by providing for the exclusion from all the societies and clubs of persons who engage in sly grog-selling.

The example of Dubki is infecting the neighbouring villages. The co-operative movement is progressing, the question of dividing up the communal property is being seriously discussed, and in several villages along the east bank of the river the partition has already been effected. In fact a more profound and far-reaching change has taken place in the country during the last five years than at any period since the emancipation. It should be noted, however, that co-operation and the break-up of the commune are two distinct movements which by no means always coalesce.

What has been said as to the application of the new Land Law does not apply to Little Russia, the southern provinces of European Russia, where private ownership is the rule and the commune does not exist. And one effect of the change

now in progress will be to make the distinction between Southern and North Central Russia, which is still very marked, much less perceptible than it has been.

The increase of population in European Russia during the last fifty years and the inadequacy of the allotments granted in many governments at the emancipation, have led to something like a land famine amongst the peasantry. The lack of land might not have been so acutely felt if improved methods of cultivation had been adopted, but for a great many reasons they were not, and the peasants had a very strong feeling that the only way out of the difficulty was to get more land. They greedily eyed the big estates of the neighbouring gentry, rented land from them when they could, and often took French leave, ploughing on their own account land belonging to the estates, ignoring frontiers between their hay meadows and those of the landowners, cutting timber in Crown or private forests. The hunger for more land, a deep-lying feeling that the peasants had been defrauded of their fair share explained the success of the agrarian agitation during the revolutionary period, the deafening outcry for land nationalisation in the First Duma and the frequent attacks of bands of peasants on big estates. The agrarian agitation was suppressed by means of police raids, the seizure of ringleaders, the development of espionage in the villages, and the stationing of Cossacks and rural guards on many of the estates in disturbed districts. But for the troubles caused by lack of land among people who live by the soil no generally effective remedy has been found.

Other Attempts to Solve Land Problem.

The peasants themselves find various palliatives. Often there is work on neighbouring estates, ploughing, harvesting, or wood-cutting. But this does not suffice, and the peasants go farther afield, spending whole summers away from home working at all sorts of trades, at the fisheries, in the mines, or as wharf labourers. Sometimes they lose the habit of

regular work and join the bands of tramps and rovers and inveterate drinkers who winter in the cities and in the spring pour out in thousands to scatter over all the high roads, passing from village to village, from estate to estate, working occasionally in order to earn money for drink. Often the peasants with small holdings drive cabs in the town in winter and work at home in the summer, or else they find employment in the factories and settle in the towns leaving their plot of land to its fate. Factory workmen of this type frequently take advantage of the new Land Law to sell their land, and so finally sever their connection with the country.

But Russia is big and there is still land enough and to spare, and if European Russia is growing small there is space enough in Siberia. Ever since the emancipation there has been a steady emigration movement to Siberia, where the peasants settled on the waste lands which were so abundant, and for a long time troubled little about property rights, considering that what a man cultivated was his own. The movement eastwards grew strongly towards the close of the nineteenth century, was temporarily checked by the war, and was renewed with redoubled intensity after the revolutionary period. The State at first paid little attention to the emigrants or colonists. Peasants in the home governments heard of a favourable spot, and sometimes sent out one of their number to spy out the land. If he reported well they sold their stock and implements and took the long journey with their wives and families. Very often, however, they proved unable to adapt themselves to the new conditions, and returned to their native commune disappointed and penniless. Even now, when the emigration movement has assumed large dimensions and is better organised and regulated, about half the emigrants return.

It was the agrarian crisis of 1905 and 1906 that caused the Government to give closer attention to the emigration question, more especially since the country gentry, alarmed

by the crisis and balancing the drawbacks that were inevitable in either case, preferred to lose possible farmhands and see the price of labour go up, rather than have their security endangered by the constant cry for more land. The Government encouraged emigration by all the means in its power. It opened up extensive areas for colonisation in the Central Asian steppes, and in doing so narrowed down the pasture lands of the nomad Kirghizes who found the transition a painful one and plainly showed their ill-will to the Russian settlers. Beyond the Urals, through Chelyabinsk passed long trains loaded with peasant families, chiefly from the southern non-communal governments. Between 1906 and 1910 nearly 340,000 families, or over a million persons in all, were settled in Siberia and Central Asia. After 1910 the movement again diminished in strength, but there is still a steady stream of emigration to the East.

Siberia is, in fact, the Russian America. The number of persons of Russian nationality who emigrate to the United States was until recently trifling, and the bulk of emigrants to America from Russia were Jews, Poles, and Lithuanians. The Russians gravitate to the Asiatic territories of the Empire. There various types meet and mingle. The Russian character changes, tradition has slight hold. Hard common sense and a go-ahead spirit prevail. The towns are rapidly growing after the American fashion. Within seven years a village called Novonikolaeivsk, near the Altai region, has grown into a town of 80,000 inhabitants, and is the centre of an important dairying district. Siberia, that is to say, forms one of the mediums by which Russia is being Americanised. And Siberia, like America, has its colour problem, for there is great difficulty in keeping out an influx of Chinese labour which is cheaper and steadier than Russian labour.

None of the measures above described form a definite solution of the land problem in Russia. They are instalments

of a solution, attacks levied on the problem from different sides, concessions to a general spirit of economic change, to the demand for the liberty of movement which is one of the chief conditions of economic progress. The essential fact is that the period of stagnation is over, that the peasant sees ways before him of which he had never dreamed, and that the necessity and possibility of change are now generally admitted.

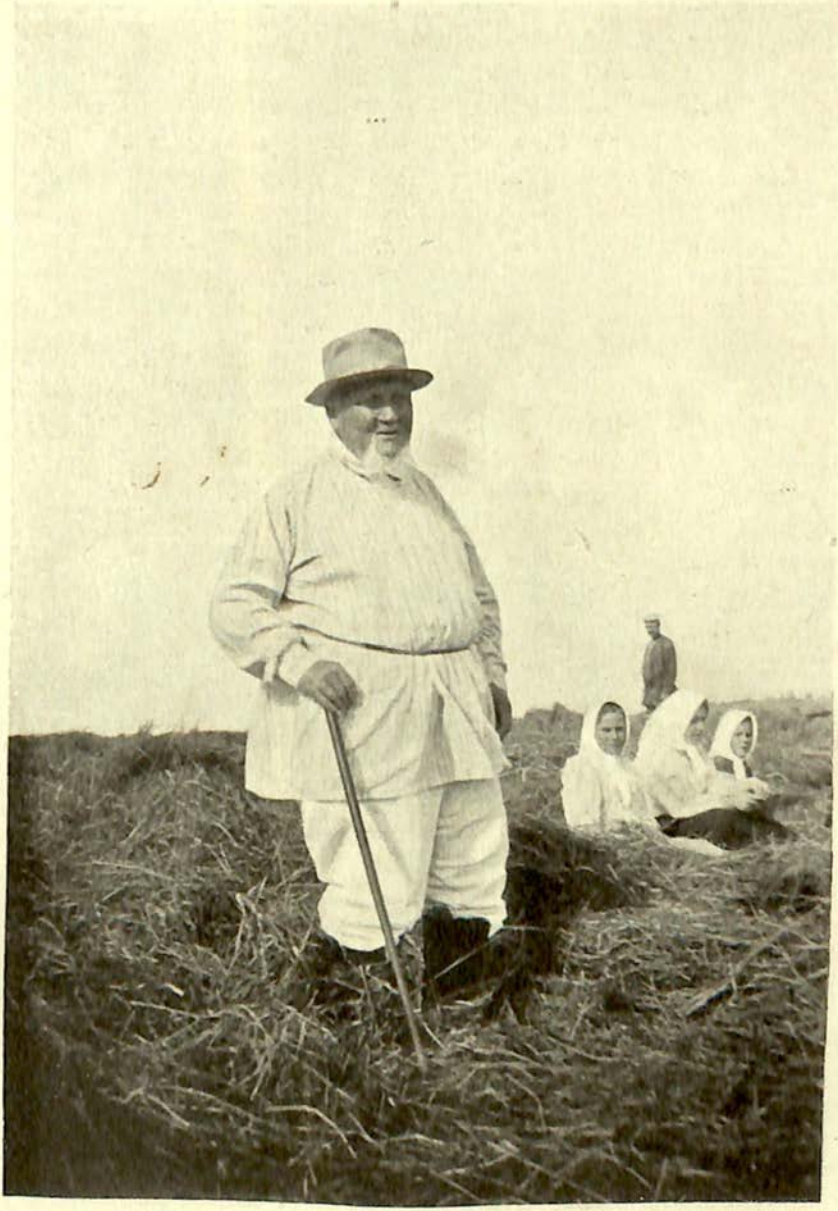
But if the peasant is changing so is his neighbour the landed proprietor, or *pomieshchik*. The estates of the country gentry are a characteristic feature of the landscape in Central and Northern Russia. The house stands preferably on a river-bank or on a hill-side. It is half-hidden amidst a grove of trees. Frequently, especially if the house was built, as a great many of the houses of the country gentry were, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it has a veranda and a balcony supported by massive white columns. Near the house there is almost sure to be a lime-tree avenue, leading to an orchard of apple, pear, and cherry trees. A flower garden, sometimes with artificial ponds, and a variety of outbuildings complete the number of immediate appurtenances to the manor-house. Indoors a wide entrance-hall, a big dining room, a drawing room, a kitchen full of busy, chattering life, stairs leading to all sorts of quaint nooks and corners, well-stocked store-rooms, libraries often containing old and valuable books, pretty, old-fashioned mahogany furniture, family portraits on the walls and generally a snug and soothing sense of leisure, security, and remoteness from the bustle of the world. Such is the home of the average *pomieshchik*. The government of Orel, of which Turgeniev was a native, was studded with such homes as these, and no one has described them more vividly than he. "Gentlefolks' Nests," he calls them, and this name with its lulling note of defence and security is still largely applicable, although the gentry no longer wield, as formerly, exclusive authority in the countryside, and the

Landed Proprietors.

disturbing forces of a new time are beating up against the white-columned mansions.

In some of the great estates stand splendid palaces with magnificent grounds as in Arkhangelskaia and Marfino in the Moscow government. And, on the other hand, there are landowners who by rank belong to the gentry, but who possess little land and live in a condition hardly differing from that of the peasantry. The steppe *pomieshchik*, again, is a type apart and so are pomieshchiks from beyond the Volga. In the south-eastern region and Siberia the conception of a *pomieshchik* as understood in the centre and the north of European Russia is simply lost amidst various categories of Cossacks, peasants, colonists, and big and small farmers of a more or less American type.

The typical *pomieshchik* has no exact counterpart in England. He is neither a country squire nor a yeoman farmer, though he may have features characteristic of both. Very often he is in the government service and devotes his chief energies to administrative work, regarding his estate merely as a place of repose and, under favourable conditions, as a source of income. During the winter months he and his family live in the city, and the estate is left in charge of a steward who may possibly be a German or a Lett, but is, as often as not, a shrewd peasant from a neighbouring village. There are honest stewards, but the average steward has an elastic conception of his rights and privileges, and the absenteeism of many proprietors, and the light-hearted indifference they often display to the business of the estate when they do come down to it during the summer months almost irresistibly tempt to peculation. Even if the proprietor is not in the Government service he probably prefers to live in the city or in the government town, and then it may easily happen that the owner of a considerable estate can barely scrape together enough money to pay the rent of his flat, while his steward on the distant estate builds himself a roomy and comfortable mansion. A landowner in the Novgorod



A RUSSIAN COUNTRY GENTLEMAN (OLD TYPE)

government built on his estate a house of stone. One day his steward came to St. Petersburg with a melancholy story of a storm having risen and the house having been swept away by the river Volhov. The landowner shook his head sadly, but it was long before he learned that the steward had simply pulled the house down and sold the materials. This experience must have disheartened the landowner, for he sold his estate through the Peasants' Bank, then made unfortunate investments and was finally ruined.

Indeed the habits acquired by the gentry during centuries of serfdom are not to be thrown off in a day. When a man inherited an estate which, having serfs upon it, produced wealth almost mechanically, fed and clothed its proprietor and provided him almost without any exertion on his part with the money he needed for living in the cities and for travelling, he would naturally pay close attention to the working of the estate only if he were personally interested in agriculture or were resolutely bent on adding to his wealth. There were, under the old system, many *pomieshchiks* who scraped and saved and sat year in, year out on their estates without ever visiting the city, who flogged the maximum of work out of their peasantry, outwitted their weaker neighbours, and by dint of economy, careful calculation, and endless litigation succeeded in greatly increasing the extent of their property. These were the methods that secured for the Grand Princes of Moscow their supremacy over their neighbours. But the Grand Princes of Moscow also brushed aside the laws which led to an incessant disintegration of big estates by providing that all the sons should inherit equally. The ordinary *pomieshchik* could in no way evade this law, and the consequence was that after a father had spent a lifetime in extending the frontiers of his property farther than the eye could reach, his death would mean the splitting up of the estate into five or six fragments, and it was not to be expected that all the sons would inherit the acquisitive

instincts of their parent. Moreover, the habit of recruiting the ranks of the administration and of the army officers from among the country gentry encouraged the growth of the type of *pomieshchik* who drew his income from his estate without ever troubling as to how it was raised.

This passive and receptive attitude to the soil lingers on to a great extent among the country gentry, and its traces are constantly met with even on estates the proprietors of which are enlightened and progressive Zemstvo-workers, are eagerly interested in agriculture, and personally superintend the cultivation of the soil. A subtle fatalism seems to be latent in the homes of the gentry. There are endless difficulties, but it seems to the proprietors incredible that they should be insurmountable. A way out is sure to be found, things cannot be as bad as they appear. Some one is sure to help, either the Government or the elements or some vague, friendly Providence. Indeed the gentry are just as responsible as the peasantry for the prevalence in Russian conversation of such comfortably optimistic phrases as *Obrazuietsia* ("It will come out all right"), or the expressive interjections, *Avos* and *Kak-nibud* ("May hap!" and "Somehow or other").

The Government does a great deal to justify the confidence of the gentry. There is an institution called the State Land Bank which was formed twenty-four years after the emancipation when it had become clear that the gentry for all their wealth in land could not cope with the difficulties of this new situation without direct financial aid. The Government needed a class of landed gentry, and since the gentry showed a tendency to let their land slip out of their hands, to turn it into money as soon as possible and then to squander the proceeds, it was the policy of the Government to find means for maintaining the connection between the gentry and the land. The Gentry's Bank accordingly advances sums on mortgage at a

State-aid.

low rate of interest, and on such easy conditions that the advance practically amounts to a donation which enables the Government to hold the land in trust for the mortgagee and to prevent its passing too rapidly into the hands of private money-lenders, or members of other classes. Even such paternal action often fails of its effect, however, and a quarter of the estates now mortgaged are registered as having passed from the possession of gentlemen into that of representatives of other classes. The total number of estates mortgaged in the Bank is over 26,000, the amount advanced on which is nearly 660 million roubles, or about 67 million pounds sterling. The greater number of estates mortgaged are in such central governments as Tula, Orel, Kursk, and Riazan. The Bank is a kindly institution, and until recently it was very tolerant of the weaknesses of the gentry, though it is growing stricter now. There is a pleasant ritual when the *pomieshchik* comes to pay interest on the mortgage; complaints on the part of the pomieshchik of hard times and inability to pay the full sum, commiseration on the part of the Bank officials, but insistence on the absolute necessity of paying the entire amount, expostulation from the pomieshchik, further demurring from the official, a little gentle bargaining, the retirement of the official to inner rooms where consultations are held, after which the official with a sigh accepts the smaller amount and remits the remainder until the following term when the scene is re-enacted.

Break-up of Large Estates.

All the benevolence of the Government does not avail, however, to establish any great fixity of tenure for the families of the gentry. The inheritance law is responsible for constant perturbations. The right of primogeniture does not exist in respect of purely Russian estates—the eldest son has an advantage only if the family possesses an entailed estate in Polish districts where the right of primogeniture does prevail—and all the sons inherit equal portions, while a daughter's interest is one-fourteenth. Then the growing

economic strength of other classes menaces the gentry. An emancipated serf makes money as a contractor and advances cash to his former master on the security of considerable areas of meadow or forest land; the security is not redeemed, the land falls into the peasant's hands. He becomes a timber merchant, buys or mortgages forests from the neighbouring gentry who are usually glad enough to sacrifice timber to save their estates, to pay for the education of their children or for travelling or to cover a variety of debts that have been contracted in the cities. The estates of the gentry grow smaller, those of the timber merchant grow larger. The merchant's sons inherit a large property and develop it. The surrounding peasants earn good money in timber-felling and rafting, for the merchant and the gentry find the wages for agricultural labourers rising and the difficulty of securing labour increasing. Some of the gentry shrink back in alarm before the growing difficulties, and after exhausting all possible methods of raising money on their land abandon the task in despair, finally dispose of their estates and become townsmen pure and simple. Others devise new methods of production and cultivation, build a starch factory and grow acres of potatoes to keep it going, start a brick-kiln if the soil is suitable, or a flour-mill, a distillery or some similar enterprise, or, if there is access to a good market engage in dairy-farming, or else try to improve the quality of their land by scientific manuring or by draining swamps. Those landowners who take their estates seriously and exploit their resources according to modern methods as a rule succeed in keeping their heads above water, but that section of the gentry which is unable to take a keen interest in agriculture and resigns itself to the will of kindly fates is being gradually elbowed off the land by pushing merchants and well-to-do commission agents and shrewd peasants and various keen-eyed financiers. Often the landowner sells his estate for a song, and has the bitterness of seeing the purchaser make a fortune out of land that he himself had considered valueless.

This flux in land tenure is inevitable under the modernising process through which Russia is now passing. The break-up of the peasant commune and the creation of a class of peasant farmers with private property means that these farmers, in so far as they are successful, will add to their property by purchasing land from the gentry. And so there will be from all sides a steady encroachment which only economically strong proprietors will be able to resist. The result will undoubtedly be immensely to increase the productiveness of the soil in European Russia—for it is in European Russia that the change is chiefly felt. It is obvious even to the inexperienced eye that far less is made of Russian estates than might be made, not to speak of the land of the peasants. The traveller who makes the railway journey via Berlin to Moscow or St. Petersburg is inevitably struck by the contrast between the level of cultivation in the estates and farms of East Prussia and those in Russia, and the difference between the agriculture of Central Russia and that of the Baltic Provinces is also very marked. A Western farmer habituated to the microscopic niceties of intensive culture on small patches of land is astonished at the waste, at the indifference to rich opportunities so often met with on Russian estates. The final break with the traditions of serfdom, the development of individual initiative and of a determination to exploit the resources of the soil to the utmost, to make money by farming instead of depending on barely aided nature, should mean a startling increase of national wealth.

A Retrospect.

Yet there is much to cherish in the period that is now passing away. It was a period that distinctly encouraged the development of the arts and the humanities. Russian culture was in the first instance and still largely is, a culture of the landed gentry. The qualities that have made Russian culture familiar to Western Europe came to consciousness in the society of the capitals and ripened to their mature expression in great works of art in the leisure of the estates. The novels

of Tolstoy, Turgeniev, and Goncharov are impregnated with the spirit of the period and stand as its permanent monuments. Tolstoy, during the 'seventies, before he experienced his religious crisis, managed his estate with great skill and energy and considerably increased his property. Turgeniev was a typical barin or gentleman, drawing an income from his estate, delighting in its associations, but incapable of devoting his energies to its management. There were books in the manors, and music, a pleasant interchange of visits, a broad hospitality, a happy manner at once courtly and genial, a life gracious and slow-moving, with a hundred protecting patriarchal ways and a caressing atmosphere of abundance and security. The spring exodus, too, from the towns with servants and bag and baggage, the long summer idleness, the rush back to the towns when autumn evenings became chilly—these are characteristic attributes of Russian culture which were directly connected with the estates. The life of the gentry had its unfavourable aspects, too, in a frequent laxity and distaste for effort. But the protest against the gentry came largely from the gentry themselves. It was a liberal party among the gentry that led the movement for emancipation from the close of the eighteenth century onwards. There were liberals who gained the name of "The Repentant Gentry." A large number of the country proprietors did useful work in the Zemstvo and took part in the agitation for a constitution. A great many revolutionaries and so-called Nihilists belonged to landowners' families, and on being released from prison returned to their estates to rest. There was for a long time and still is a close connection between the gentry and the intelligentsia, and many characteristic features of the latter are explicable as a result of this connection. Altogether the contribution of the landed gentry to modern Russian culture has been one of first-class importance.

To balance this contribution there is the record of serfdom and the fact that there now exists among the landed gentry

a heavily conservative and reactionary element which is strongly hostile to progress and which loses no opportunities of checking the advance of the constitutional movement and of turning it backwards. This section of the gentry forms, in fact, the bulwark of the reaction. It represents the stubborn protest of a class that feels its economic and social position threatened by the forces of change. As though recognising that the elaborately traditional organisation for the protection of the interests of the gentry—the Assemblies of the Gentry with a Marshal of the Gentry in each district and government, various funds for the aid of the gentry, ward over the estates of minors and spendthrifts, education at the expense of the State in certain privileged schools and so-forth—were insufficient to stem the tide that threatened the existence of the class, they formed an Association of the United Gentry to whose influence the dissolution of the Second Duma and the modification of the electoral law were mainly due. In this organisation the gentry of Kursk take the leading share. Some of its members described themselves as *zubry*, aurochses, the last representatives of an almost extinct species, and the epithet was caught up by the press and public, is now in constant use and characterises the general attitude towards the Association. This reactionary organisation does not include the majority of the gentry, who, to judge by the Duma elections, are generally Conservative Constitutionalists in politics.

But at any rate the change is in process, and is working itself out in a gradual encroachment of the new middle-class of the towns on the land, in the rapid extension, especially in South-eastern Russia and Siberia of the area under cultivation, in the growth of the wheat export trade from Southern Russia, in a very largely increased demand for agricultural machinery and implements, in a growing competition between industry and agriculture for labour and a consequent rise in wages, in the development of co-operation and the new movement of inquiry amongst the peasantry. It is an astonishing

process, so immense in its range and sweep that once begun it seems bound to acquire an irresistible impetus. It is the economic corollary to the recently completed conquest of the great plain. And before this prospect the difficulties and dangers of the present seem less formidable than when viewed in the narrow perspective of to-day.

CHAPTER XII

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

A FEW years ago the peasants of a village not far from St. Petersburg were haymaking in meadows by the riverside when to their amazement they saw a she-bear with two cubs swimming towards them across the stream. The bear landed, and taking no notice of the peasants, some of whom fled in terror while others vainly gave chase with scythes and other implements, pursued into the nearest forest the way it had so oddly taken. Probably the ancestors of these peasants would have shown more alertness and resource in dealing with the bear. Long ago in the early ages of their history the main occupation of the Russians was the capture of wild animals and the sale of their skins. This occupation constituted, in fact, the basis of Russian trade. The many wandered about the forest hunting or gathering the wax and honey of wild bees, while the comparatively few who lived along the great trade routes bought up the products of the chase and sold them in exchange for the varied products of a higher civilisation, from gaudy beads to rich silks and gold ornaments, to the foreign traders who came sailing inland from outlying seas. It was this trading class that with the help of foreign corsairs founded the Russian State.

Growth of Industrialism.

But that period has receded into the dim distance of legend. In the Novgorod region a bear nowadays is a rare and perplexing interruption in the routine of husbandry. Hunting from being the staple business of the people has dwindled down to the sport of the few, of the proprietors of the large estates, and of the members of sporting clubs, the officials, judges, and business men who come down from the city for week-ends to shoot in preserves guarded by gamekeepers and foresters. And not often does a bear or an elk or any wild

animal but a fox or a hare fall to the lot of the average sportsman in the greater part of European Russia. Birds are the chief prey—grouse, snipe, partridge, woodcocks, quails, and so forth—and the sport thus provided satisfies the ambitions of most amateur huntsmen. But as human beings have multiplied and spread over the plain the wild beasts have been driven back beyond the Urals. Now the Russian fur traders in St. Petersburg and Moscow have to make annual journeys to the fur markets in Siberia, and in Irbit they buy up the sables and ermines for which Ostiaks have hunted along the Ob or Tartars and Soiots in the Altai ranges or Yakuts in the region of the Yablonoi and Stanovoi mountains. London and Leipzig are the chief fur marts of the world, and skins and furs are a mere detail of Russian trade as they are of the world's. Agriculture has succeeded to the chase, and the chief article of export is now corn in its several varieties, wheat, barley, oats, rye, and buckwheat, over seven hundred millions of poods of which are sent abroad annually.

But as hunting gave place to agriculture, as the Russian population grew and its dominions extended, the transit trade over the plain was gradually transformed into internal Russian trade. What happened in the olden days was that Northmen, Arabs, and Greeks traded across the plain, so to speak, over the heads of the Russians, the Russians getting only the scraps that fell by the way. But by the time the Russians had fought their way out to the sea-coasts they had made the plain self-sufficing. It was no longer with its rivers a mere waste expanse, a mere immense distance to be crossed like the sea with, by the way, some profit of wild beasts and skins instead of fish. It was the seat of a big political organism different from both the East and the West to whose mutual needs the plain had formerly ministered, and possessing a very curious economic life of its own. The merchant had been together with the warrior the creator of the State because he was perpetually concerned with the outside world. The merchant was always dealing with

WOODFELLING IN A FOREST IN VOLOGDA GOVERNMENT

foreign merchants who were called guests. But by the time of Peter the Great the merchants were no longer politically the most important members of the community. They had fallen into their places as middlemen in a big, clumsy, agricultural community in which the landowners naturally took the lead. Peter made the merchants more important than they had been by opening a way out to Europe, and the importance of the merchant class has steadily risen in proportion as Russia has been steadily drawn into the movement of world trade. But many traces of the process of development still linger. The Russian merchant is not like those of other countries. In his mental make-up, in the traditions and conventions of his class there is something of the Moscow merchant who under the Tartar yoke was accustomed to trade chiefly with the East, and of that St. Petersburg merchant who was as often as not a German, and at any rate was strongly influenced in all his dealings by Germans and Swedes. It is the latter type that has been the means of slowly modernising the others, and the process of modernisation is still going on, is not yet complete, and is centred not in St. Petersburg but in Moscow, the heart of the Empire.

The Merchant.

The Russian merchants have not wholly ceased to form a world apart. They constitute one of the five classes or castes into which the population of the Empire is divided, and the effects of this division in creating a strong class feeling, with well-marked class customs and deep class prejudices are still very clearly visible, although modern commercialism is doing its levelling work. The English word "merchant" has, indeed, a slightly incongruous sound as applied to members of the Russian trading class. In England the word seems suggestive of a city man in silk hat and frock-coat, of an alderman, of the Tabard Inn, or of the portly head of some mediaeval Venetian firm. The Russian merchant is a different being, although he certainly has many

mediaeval characteristics. He is called a *kupiets*, or buyer, which is a word having the same root as the German kaufmann or our "chapman." Not so many years ago most members of the class wore a characteristic costume, a long kaftan of dark cloth, hooked, not buttoned, up to the neck, a belt around the waist, baggy trousers, top-boots, neck-cloth, and peaked cap. A beard was worn and the hair cut so as not to hang lower than the nape of the neck. This costume may be still frequently seen in the smaller towns, and the way in which its various elements are combined with modern articles of clothing indicates the extent to which the process of Westernisation has developed. The peak cap and top-boots often linger on when the kaftan has given place to a humdrum jacket. Starched shirts and collars are adopted last of all. The merchants have their own peculiar modes of speech, their quips and cranks, their own elaborate etiquette. They are punctilious in their observance of church ritual—not a few of them are Old Believers—pay serious attention, in contrast to the intelligentsia, to the details of eating and drinking and the mere process of living generally, are very hospitable within their own circle, and make much of festivals and family events such as births, marriages, and deaths. The typical merchant of the not distant past could hardly read or write. He kept no books—the word for book-keeper in Russian is borrowed from German—but had a peculiarly retentive memory for figures and facts. Business deals were as a rule effected in traktirs, or tea-rooms, over endless glasses of weak tea. Shop-signs took the form of pictures suggestive of the kind of goods sold, and even now the practice is retained in provincial towns and many quarters of the cities. The picture of a sad-eyed ox on the edge of a precipice, or a sheep gazing in blank astonishment into space proclaims to the illiterate the existence of a butcher's shop; a baker's shop displays on its signboard big round loaves and a curling *krendel;* while the rigid forms of spiritless fish declare that within you may purchase the rich produce of

Russian rivers and Northern seas, from the antediluvian sturgeon to the common herring. How recent is the time when the bulk of merchants and customers alike were innocent of letters!

In Russian literature the merchants have received far less attention than the gentry and the peasantry, and in the masterpieces generally known to Western readers they are almost unrepresented. They are admirably described in the comedies of the best of the Russian dramatists, Ostrovsky, which are frequently played in the Imperial theatres. Certain sides of merchant life are dealt with in the stories of a present day writer, Remizov. The typical Russian merchant is now rapidly giving place to the modern business man. Education is spreading. The merchant sends his sons to high school and University, and when they return to carry on the business they infallibly break with the old ways and introduce modern methods. Or else they fall away altogether from the merchant class and enter the professions or the Government service. Perhaps they take a keener interest in foreign trade than their fathers, although it must be admitted that many merchants of the older type displayed great shrewdness in this respect. One Moscow merchant, who is illiterate and naturally not acquainted with foreign languages, went to England over a decade ago and there established what proved to be a successful branch of his business. But the younger men sometimes study abroad in German commercial high schools or even in Universities and come back full of new ideas as to the conduct of business and of new views on life generally. If the older generation was conservative in its business methods and social and political views the younger generation is in the main progressive. But the older generation, especially in Moscow, was far from being wholly untouched by the humanities and can display some munificent patrons of art and learning. The Tretiakov Gallery, the best of Russian picture galleries, was presented to the city of Moscow by the family of the merchant whose

name it bears. Another merchant named Shchukin, who recently died, transformed his house into a rich museum containing amongst other things the best collection of Post-Impressionist pictures in Europe. Wealthy Moscow merchants again have contributed liberally to the endowment of the Commercial Institute, an institution of higher learning which possesses almost University rank. Frequently Moscow merchants employ the best architects and painters to build and decorate their houses, sometimes with admirable results, though not infrequently the effect is spoiled owing to some headstrong caprice of the proprietor. In any case, broad and enlightened views are making great headway amongst the Moscow merchants who because of their wealth and their central position take the lead in the Russian commercial world.

Foreigners in Commerce.

One very important factor of modernisation is the participation of foreigners in Russian commercial and industrial life. In St. Petersburg and Moscow there are large German colonies and also a very considerable number of Englishmen. The traditions of the St. Petersburg English colony go back to the days of the Archangel trade and of the old British Company, and the British Church in St. Petersburg is still the property of a trading company. Many English families have been established in the Russian capital for generations, and although some have become through the lapse of time Russian subjects, and it occasionally happens that the members of families originally English are unable to speak the language of their ancestors, the persistence with which the greater part of the colony retain their English traits, maintain their connection with the mother country and send their children to England to be educated is very remarkable. English influence on Russian commercial life is less marked, however, than German influence. The Germans have many advantages. In the first place they are near neighbours, and in the second place, through the Baltic Germans they have a direct and vital

connection with the population of the Empire. Their agents usually know the language and tastes of the country, which is by no means always the case with English agents, and German firms are more elastic than English firms in giving the long credit which is habitual in Russian business. When Germans settle to carry on business they more readily become assimilated than the English do, although, on the other hand, the Englishman seems as a rule to be much more successful than the German in acquiring a good Russian accent. Efforts have hitherto been made in connection with the Anglo-Russian *entente* to promote the development of commercial relations between England and Russia by the establishment of an Anglo-Russian Chamber of Commerce which works in conjunction with the London Chamber of Commerce, and has met with considerable success. The arguments employed in favour of a commercial *rapprochement* between England and Russia are first, that the two countries are economically complementary, the former being an industrial and the latter an agricultural country, and, secondly, that Russia with its latent resources and its lack of adequate means for developing them presents an eminently suitable field for the investment of English capital. The development of the *rapprochement* has been impeded by the general uncertainty of the political situation, while the complicated passport system and a variety of administrative difficulties act as a deterrent to commercial penetration. The amount of foreign investments in Russia is, however, steadily increasing, and of recent years English investments have been especially prominent. Within the Government there is a curious division of opinion on the subject of the introduction of foreign capital, a minority of extreme Nationalists holding the view that it simply means taking wealth out of the country, while a majority, which generally carries the day, points out that Russia can only gain by any development of her natural resources which may result from the employment of foreign capital in their exploitation.

In the commercial life of the country the Jews, in spite of the severe restrictions imposed upon them, play a prominent part, and their business talent and energy are displayed to advantage in the general process of modernisation. The bulk of the Jewish population are forbidden to live outside the towns and townships in the Pale, that is in the Southern and Western provinces that once constituted the territory of the Polish State, and one of the effects of this restriction is to be seen in the embittered economic struggle which is now being waged between the new Polish middle-class and the Jews in the kingdom of Poland. But a considerable number of Jews have, in virtue of artisans' certificates, membership in merchants' guilds, a University education, or through the acceptance of some form of Christianity, secured the right to live outside the Pale, and these are very active in the business world, especially in matters of finance, as commission agents, brokers, and in the management of banks. The extreme Nationalists have been loud in their protests against the economic activity of the Jews, and have even gone so far as to demand that they shall be deprived of the right of signing bills of exchange. At the same time, many wealthy reactionaries in their own private dealings associate with Jewish business men without the slightest compunction. The whole Jewish problem has become complicated to an excessive and intolerable degree by political considerations and racial agitation, but even under the present abnormal conditions Jewish restlessness and enterprise act as an appreciable stimulus in promoting the economic development of the Empire. In the trade with the Near and Middle East the Armenians play an important part as intermediaries.

In a word, the process of the modernisation of Russian trade is in full swing. Many reminiscences of the past are still to be found. The annual fair at Nizhni-Novgorod maintains the traditions of the days of slow-moving, steamless trade with the east, but in itself now serves as a means for

the penetration of modern influences eastward. In many merchant homes beyond the Moskva river Moscow patriarchal customs are retained, although the daily newspaper is undermining their authority. In the centre of St. Petersburg there is an institution called the *Gostiny Dvor*, or " Guest's Court," an old Russian name for something in the nature of a permanent market, long rows of retail shops of all kinds arranged in concentric squares around a courtyard. It is a sort of disorderly departmental store, only that the departments are owned by separate proprietors and overlap repeatedly. Even more puzzling than the Gostiny Dvor are the neighbouring markets, where after passing through the line of shops that face the street you find yourself in a labyrinth of little shops in which only the experienced can make purchases, since if you buy nails in one shop it by no means follows that you will not have to buy tin-tacks three streets away in another shop that seems to be mainly devoted to the sale of leather goods. In such haunts as these the old-fashioned Russian merchant spirit is strongly felt, while in the streets outside modern commercialism is rampant, with its noisy advertisements, its small profits and quick returns, and its eager race for the latest fashions.

Modernisation of Business.

Business is, in fact, increasing in pace and volume, is being modernised, because the whole trading region has grown so big, and because the distances across it have been vastly shortened by improved means of communication. The political barriers on the plain have been broken down and various areas have been linked together ; the plain has been opened up. Instead of a number of small trading communities with imperfect means of intercommunication there is now one immense trading community as broad as the Empire and possessing an interesting combination of ancient and modern traffic facilities, waterways and railways, caravans and motor-vans, barges and vessels with internal combustion engines. The waterways that years ago made possible a transit trade across the plain

are still freely used. Russia has a network of long rivers with endless tributaries that make it possible to sail from one end of the plain to another, so that in some respects Russia may be compared to an immensely enlarged Holland. Several of the rivers are connected by canals. Steamers, most of which are in the hands of private owners, ply up and down all the navigable rivers during the summer months. Several companies compete for the rich trade on the Volga. Well-equipped steamers maintain traffic amidst the beautiful scenery of the Northern Dvina which flows into the White Sea. English steamers formerly crept cautiously round the North coast through the Arctic Ocean and the Kara Sea, and entering the swift-running Yenisei made their way up as far as Krasnoyarsk, a station on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Petroleum is sent from Baku to Warsaw by a roundabout water route; first up the Volga to Rybinsk where it is reshipped into smaller vessels and then conveyed through the intricate Marie Canal and river system to Lake Ladoga, the Neva, and St. Petersburg. Here it is again reshipped and carried by sea to Danzig whence after further reshipping it is taken up the Vistula to Warsaw, no duties being paid in German territory in transit goods.

Transport.

All this busy water traffic is naturally confined to the spring, summer, and autumn months, for during the winter all the rivers and the Baltic ports, except Libau and to a certain extent Reval, are reduced to enforced idleness. And then the immense importance of railways for Russia becomes manifest. The waterways can only be auxiliaries to traffic. The growth of modern Russia and the final unification of the Empire are coincident with the development of the railway system. And it is largely because of the railways that make Odessa thirty-six hours, Baku a week, and Harbin three weeks distant from St. Petersburg, that merchants who begin on a small scale can now rapidly build up a successful business, that a pottery manufacturer, for instance, who began

with a capital of £2,000 has now built a whole township around his factory and sells his plates and jugs in the distant markets of Central Asia. It was in 1836 that the first railway was built between St. Petersburg and Tsarskoe Selo, during the following years the chief centres in European Russia were linked up by rail, and then began the penetration of Asia by iron ways. The enterprising General Annenkov pushed the Trans-Caspian Railway through the Turkestan Steppe to Tashkent. The great Trans-Siberian Railway was begun in the 'nineties and brought the Far East startlingly near, suddenly increased tenfold the economic importance of Siberia, but at the same time raised grave political problems. The Caucasus was finally subdued by the construction of railways and a great many admirable roads. The primary considerations in the construction of many of the chief Russian railways have been strategic, and strategic and economic interests by no means coincide. The great majority of the railways have been built and are owned by the Government, and the few private railways that exist are being gradually bought up by the State. The railway system has, in fact, served as a very important means of bureaucratic unification and centralisation. But in the measure of their extension and their perfection they serve to assure steadiness and regularity in economic progress. There are not nearly enough railways in Russia, and an enormous amount remains to be done in the construction of roads. It may be said, indeed, that the traffic system has been so far only sketched out, and the filling in and the perfecting of the details will be a matter of time and increased political and economic efficiency. Moreover, the administration of the railway system, in spite of certain improvements effected in recent years, leaves very much to be desired. Blocks of goods trains are frequent, while trains of corn are stranded for weeks *en route*, waggon loads of goods fail to reach their destination, and amongst the railway employees bribery is common. These are inevitable defects in the present condition of the country. But

the railways have in any case lifted Russian economic life beyond the stage of exclusive dependence on climatic conditions and are assimilating it to that of Western countries.

Railway construction has a very direct effect on industry. The demand for rails has stimulated the output of iron and coal, and thus has not only promoted the development of the earlier industrial regions around Moscow and in the Urals, but has been one of the chief causes of the growth of new industrial areas in Poland and in the south and south-east of European Russia. Russian industry is still a small thing, both in comparison with Russian agriculture and also, and this more especially, in comparison with that of Western Europe. It lags behind in its application of mechanical power. The day of handicrafts and artisan production and of cottage industries is still recent, and in some respects this is fortunate, for the persistence of cottage industries into the later and more enlightened period of the Machine Age has made it possible for Zemstvos and Benevolent Institutions to take measures for rescuing them from extinction and even for reviving them. The curious and picturesque bric-a-brac, the wicker-work, embroidery, woodwork, leather goods, toys, pottery, and pictures that are the work of peasants in their homes during the long winter months have a distinct artistic and economic value. Then the handicrafts serve to a certain extent as auxiliaries to machine industry. An extensive demand has sprung up for cotton fabrics. These fabrics are manufactured chiefly in the mills of the Moscow industrial region, that is, in the governments of Moscow, Vladimir, Yaroslavl, Kostroma, and Nizhni-Novgorod, and also on the outskirts of St. Petersburg, and to a certain extent in Poland. Raw cotton is imported from America and Egypt, while a certain amount is drawn from the new and steadily broadening cotton-growing area in Turkestan. In Yaroslavl and Kostroma a good deal of the work is done on hand looms in the homes of the workers.

But machine industries are growing and freeing themselves from the traditions of serfdom and the associations of the home industries. A century ago the few factories that existed employed serf-labour, and relics of this patriarchal state of affairs are still to be found in the big iron works in the Urals where the labourers lived as serfs on the estate of a great landed proprietor, and after the emancipation received, like other former serfs, allotments of land, which they still retain, somehow combining a certain amount of farming and gardening with their work in the foundries. During the last fifty years the factories have drawn their labour supply from among peasants who possessed little or no land or found cultivation unprofitable, and this circumstance served to maintain a regular connection between the factories and the soil. In time the connection tended to lapse and a new generation grew up to form a modern working class. The recent law providing for the breaking up of the village commune is effectually cutting most of the remaining ties between the workers and the village, except in such regions as the Vladimir government, where the factories are at the doors of the villages and agriculture mingles with industry in dusty and sooty confusion.

Growth of Factories.

A rough and crude industrial life is growing up in the south of Russia, in the coalmines and iron-foundries of the government of Ekaterinoslav and the Donets basin generally, and also in the neighbourhood of Odessa. The Kingdom of Poland again has within the last fifty years become, especially in the districts around Warsaw, Lodz, and Sosnowice, one of the most important industrial regions in the Empire, and one of the chief factors militating against the separatist tendencies due to political oppression is the immense gain accruing to Polish industry from the broad, open market that stretches from the Austrian and Prussian frontier to the Pacific Ocean. It was the attempt of German manufacturers to take advantage of this market by erecting branch factories just over the frontier that gave the chief impetus

to Polish industry. Riga is the industrial centre of the Baltic provinces. But when these districts are added to the Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Ural regions, when the Baku oil fields are taken into account and reference is made to the sawmills that are scattered about the northern forests, the factories for the manufacture of beet-root sugar in Southern Russia, the gold mining in Eastern Siberia, and the output of platinum in the Urals and of manganese ore in the Caucasus, of both of which Russia has almost a monopoly, the extent of Russian machine industry is almost exhausted. Only the hiss of steam and the whirr of machinery do not exhaust the immense variety of interesting work that is done throughout Russia. There are the fisheries, the various stages of grain export, the salt-works in the steppes, the making of *kumys* or fermented mare's milk, and a hundred other kinds of work besides.

But the rise of machine industry in Russia, backward though it still is, and slow as is its movement—from 1900 to 1908 the number of factory workers rose from 1,343,000 to 1,559,000, an increase of 16 per cent., while in Germany the increase for the same period was 28 per cent., and in Germany the average of the annual extension of application of steam power in industry is 13.5 per cent., while in Russia it amounts only to 5·2 per cent.—has yet had very important social consequences. This is not the place to describe that extremely interesting process by which side by side with the development of industry there grew up a labour movement. This movement under the conditions prevailing in Russia inevitably assumed a political and revolutionary character. And this fact has given the labour movement in Russia an intensity, a passion, and a persistent importance which would be otherwise inexplicable considering the comparative backwardness of Russian industrial development. It was the strikes of the workmen in 1905 which disorganised the machinery of public life and led to the standstill on the railways and the great general strike which terminated on the

promulgation of the constitution. The workmen have suffered severely from the repression of the following years, and the trade unions which had been successfully organised have been the object of especially severe measures. One effect of the bitter and turbulent experiences of the last decade has been very considerably to raise the level of intelligence amongst the working men, and in spite of administrative restrictions a serious educational and economic movement persists among them.

While on the one hand industry is slowly fashioning out of peasants a modern working class, on the other hand it is dovetailing into the merchant class a new class of big industrialists. Russia contains a large element of foreign enterprise to which Englishmen, Germans, French, Belgians, Swedes, and, of late years, Americans, have all contributed their share. But Russian merchants and hard-fisted and pushing peasants and representatives of the gentry have been drawn into the new current and the Russian industrialists of to-day present a curious combination of the Western European factory owner with the Russian merchant. The industrialists in Moscow form in conjunction with the wealthy merchants of the city the vanguard of a rising middle class. This middle class is displaying a growing spirit of political independence and cherishes a fierce antagonism towards the country gentry on whose support the bureaucracy has mainly relied. Russian industry has hitherto been under Government tutelage and the Government has been the best customer of metallurgists and mineowners. But at the present moment industry is emerging from the chrysalis stage, and the process is singularly interesting.

There is a great deal that is heavy and oppressive in Russian industrialism. The factory laws are fairly good, but they are frequently evaded, especially in districts remote from the centres, where the employers bribe the administrative authorities and engage in systematic and brutal exploitation which may lead to such tragic results as the shooting down of the

Lena miners in 1912. Excessive drinking is the rule in factory districts. The grosser forms of amusement make their way. The dark sides of industrial life are only too apparent, and under present political conditions it is difficult to mitigate them. Industrial life probably means progress in Russia, but at present it is a very rough-and-tumble and creaking kind of progress.

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE CHIEF CITY

"THE chief city" is still St. Petersburg. Moscow has never wholly yielded her ancient supremacy to the new city on the Neva, and retains the proud title of the first capital. There are, in fact, two capitals in Russia, and if St. Petersburg may be described as the Imperial capital, Moscow is the Russian capital. Or perhaps Moscow may be regarded as the metropolis of sentiment and tradition and St. Petersburg as the metropolis of power. But this is true only if power be taken in the sense of political power. Economically Moscow is more influential than St. Petersburg, and as a literary and artistic centre Moscow is at least equal and in some respects superior to St. Petersburg. Since the trend of economic development in Russia is towards the south, towards the Black Sea Basin, it seems natural to suppose that the economic importance of Moscow will continue to grow much more rapidly than that of its rival. Moscow is nearer the greater part of the Empire than the newer capital. The resident of St. Petersburg in order to reach Eastern and South-eastern Russia, the Crimea, and the Caucasus must pass through Moscow. It is only to Kiev, Odessa, Warsaw, and the Western frontier that he possesses direct routes independent of the ancient capital. The Muscovite, on the other hand, is under no necessity to pass through St. Petersburg on his way anywhere, except to Helsingfors. The civic spirit is much stronger in Moscow than in St. Petersburg. And it is a curious fact that whereas Moscow, as the centre of the process of "gathering in the Russian lands," once represented a hard, shrewd, and calculating despotism it now embodies far more than St. Petersburg public initiative and civil liberty. Of those two figures who by their conflict and

St. Petersburg.

co-operation have determined the course of Russian history, the full-blooded, broad-chested, roving bogatyr, and the diak or Government clerk, the former may now be said to have his seat in Moscow, the latter in St. Petersburg.

For all that the present is the St. Petersburg period of Russian history. The mere fact that the administration of such a vast Empire is concentrated on the banks of the Neva gives the city a steady predominance which it is difficult even for Moscow, with its traditional charm and its industrial and commercial energy, to shake. Moreover, St. Petersburg continues to be the "window looking out into Europe." It may be argued that this particular function is growing obsolete. Connection with Western Europe by sea can only be maintained for about eight months in the year. Regular connection can be maintained only by rail, and by rail Moscow is practically as close to Berlin and Paris as St. Petersburg is. But St. Petersburg still retains its significance as a "window," for while Moscow is in the very heart of Russia, is in the very midst of the sphere of Russian civilisation, St. Petersburg is a Russian outpost on the fringe of the Germanic sphere. The territory on which St. Petersburg stands is ethnographically hardly Russian at all. It is only made Russian by the fact of St. Petersburg being there. The city stands partly on the site of Finnish villages, and it is surrounded by Finns. Not only is the frontier of the Grand Duchy of Finland only an hour's railway journey from St. Petersburg. The peasants of Tsarskoe Selo and Pavlovsk are pure Finns, and the Finnish language may be constantly heard in the parks in the neighbourhood of the palace. And the farmers who look over the fence of the St. Petersburg Aviation Ground when flights are in progress are nearly all of them Finns. The Finnish population extends along the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland down to near Narva, where the Esthonians, another variety of Finns, begin. The word Neva itself is Finnish and means a swamp. Tsarskoe Selo was originally the Finnish village of Saari, which means

"The Island." Saari became Saarskoe Selo (*selo* meaning a village), and since the place became an Imperial residence, the Saarskoe Selo very naturally became Tsarskoe Selo or The Village of the Tsars.

Finnish peasants and Russian Tsars—the juxtaposition is rather startling, but it has a very definite historical significance. The territory of St. Petersburg has not an exclusively Finnish past. It once formed part of the territory of the Republic of Novgorod, and in the Novgorod days there were Russians on Lake Ladoga, on the Neva, and on the southern coast of the Gulf of Finland. The Grand Prince Alexander Nevsky defeated the Swedes at the mouth of the Izhora near St. Petersburg. The region was, in fact, a perpetual battle-ground between Russians and Swedes, and the Finns passed under the dominion now of the one, now of the other people. In the long run the greater number of the Finns fell to Sweden and so were definitely annexed to the Germanic sphere of civilisation. The Finns in Tsarskoe Selo and around St. Petersburg are very simple folk, but the civilisation they have is Germanic. They are Protestants, and the newspaper they read is printed in Gothic letters. Peter wrested the Baltic from the Swedes, and when at the beginning of the eighteenth century he gained the mastery over the Baltic, the whole coast-line was in the grasp of a strong Germanic civilisation, or in other words, of that form of European culture which contained the most vital elements of progress. When Peter founded St. Petersburg it meant that he planted his capital right within the Germanic and Protestant sphere. He made the two spheres, that of Russo-Byzantine and of Germanic culture interpenetrate. And it is for this fact, for the interfusion of two cultures that St. Petersburg still stands. It is not only a gate by which European influence enters Russia. It is also—and this second function grows more important as the years go by—a gate by which Russian influence passes into Europe. It is the key to Russia.

The position of St. Petersburg represents a development

of the most ancient traditions of Russian history. St. Petersburg is the successor not only of Moscow, but of Novgorod. The Varengers, or Variagi, the Scandinavian warriors who established themselves in Novgorod and Kiev, came up in their ships by way of the Gulf of Finland and the Neva. The spot where St. Petersburg now stands once formed the entrance to that "Great Way" which led from the land of the Varengers to the land of the Greeks, from Scandinavia to Constantinople. It is associated with the early civilisation of Northern Europe. And it is because St. Petersburg is where it is that Russia is now not merely an Eastern but a North European power.

The Neva opens out into the Finnish Gulf on the north of which is Finland with its Swedish associations and on the south Esthonia. Sweden lies just outside the Gulf and the Baltic Provinces, which begin with Esthonia and are impregnated with specifically German culture, end at the Prussian frontier. The whole of the area on which St. Petersburg looks out thus comes within the domain of Germanic culture in the broad sense. But this area is not confined to the Baltic. It is a maritime area and extends beyond, to Norway, Denmark, Holland and England. St. Petersburg draws vitality from the restless maritime enterprise in the Baltic and North Seas. The chief link between the continent and the ocean is here. St. Petersburg is the principal port in the vast Empire, even though navigation is ice-bound for five months in the year. Riga has a bigger export trade now that it has been linked up more closely by rail with the interior. But Riga owes its rapid modern growth to St. Petersburg. It was through the existence of the capital on the Neva that the Baltic Provinces were brought into that close and intimate connection with Central Russia, that gave the port of Riga at the mouth of the Dvina a new importance. In imports St. Petersburg leads. About half the import trade of the Empire follows overland routes, and of the overland imports the station of Wirballen, or Wierzbolowo

on the Prussian frontier registers the greatest volume. But St. Petersburg is in advance of Wirballen and all the ports as well. Yet the prominence of St. Petersburg in the Baltic and North Sea area is not a mere matter of imports and exports. It is a political prominence. St. Petersburg is the watch-tower of the greatest land Empire, and the outlook from this watch-tower is over the grey northern seas. The fact has manifold political implications, some hopeful, some disquieting. The Finnish problem is here, and the wariness of Sweden and to some extent the alertness of Germany are to be explained by the concentration of Russian energy on the Neva. On the other hand, Anglo-Russian friendship, the friendship between the land and the sea empires, seems to find its natural centre in this watch-tower. The famous meeting between King Edward and the Emperor Nicholas, which marked an epoch in the development of Anglo-Russian relations, took place at sea just off Reval. But this very fact indicates the weak point in the rapprochement. The friendship between the two countries would have been very much deeper, stronger, and more effective, if Russia had not been so torn by internal strife that the Government did not venture to arrange the meeting on land, in St. Petersburg, in the midst of its own people. It is the Neva that gives St. Petersburg character, life and beauty. The only other European capital that has a river to be compared with that on which St. Petersburg stands is London. One might easily debate the relative merits of the Neva and the Thames. There are moments when the one is strongly suggestive of the other. In the city area they appear to be about equal in breadth. The political importance of St. Petersburg as a maritime city is, however, diminished by the absence of a strong fleet in the Baltic and by the attraction of Russian political interest to the Black Sea region and the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

On the land side St. Petersburg appears to thrive on the assimilation of distance. Far more than Moscow the city

represents a conquest over nature. And this not merely because it was built on a swamp, but because it represents a concentration and centralisation of the resources of the Empire. It lives by the far rather than by the near. It lives by broad generalisation, and this accounts for an air of coldness and severity that contrasts with the cheerful spontaneity of Moscow. After all, what resources lie in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Petersburg? The greater part of the population of the St. Petersburg government owes its presence to the fact of the city's existence. The St. Petersburg government merges into the Novgorod region, but for all its ancient prosperity and importance the Novgorod government is far from being wealthy or progressive now. The last blows to the prosperity of Novgorod were due to the efforts of St. Petersburg to ensure rapid communication with the interior. The establishment at the beginning of the nineteenth century of the Marie Canal system opening communication with the Upper Volga at Rybinsk by way of Lakes Ladoga and Onega, Bielozero (or The White Lake), and the river Sheksna diverted traffic from the central waterways of Novgorod. And when the railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow was built it took a straight line between the two capitals, leaving Novgorod on one side to dream of the days when Imperial couriers rode swiftly, and when a constant flow of coaches, sleighs and tarantasses passed over the old high road between the Kremlin and the Neva. This treatment of Novgorod illustrates St. Petersburg's indifference to detail, of its eagerness to sketch out a broad plan which may afterwards be gradually filled in at leisure. The Baltic provinces are almost at the gates of the city and are being drawn more and more into the sphere of its influence. There is a large German colony in the city a considerable part of which is of Baltic origin. There are German shopkeepers and artisans, and numbers of German girls from Esthonia, Livland, and Courland are employed as cheap governesses or nurses. There are large

Esthonian and Lettish colonies, too, with churches and benevolent and literary organisations. The Baltic element makes a useful and indispensable contribution to the city's work, but no one would describe it as characteristic of the capital. The railway that creeps along the southern shore of the Finnish Gulf from St. Petersburg to Reval, sending out a branch on the way to Riga, brings into the city daily large supplies of milk, butter, eggs and vegetables.

Finland, in spite of its nearness to St. Petersburg, is kept apart by its autonomy, which expresses itself among other things in the existence of a customs barrier. But of late years the influence of St. Petersburg has been extending into Finland. The growing population of the capital is going farther and farther afield in its search for *dachas* or summer cottages, in which the families of St. Petersburg residents spend the long school holidays, the working members of each family travelling daily to and from business. The line of *dachas* has crossed the Finnish frontier. Kuokkala and Terioki, two seaside villages just over the border, are crowded with Russians during the summer months, and this movement of summer colonisation following the Helsingfors railway line, has now reached the outskirts of Viborg. A great deal of Finnish land in the region is being sold to Russians, and many of the *dachas* are displaying a tendency to become permanent residences. It is remarkable how in spite of this influx the region maintains its distinctively Finnish character.

To the north-east of St. Petersburg lie the Russian governments of Archangel and Olonets and Volagda. How close to the capital is this strange northern region that reaches up to the Arctic zone! There are times when the city seems to be caught in the power of the north, to be held on the fringe of existence, on the melancholy rim of the world, remote from the cheerful, bustling, turbulent life of Central and Southern Europe. There are grey, winter days, when the north wind comes straight down from the Polar regions and seems to claim the city for darkness and desolation.

Years ago the proximity of the north was made vivid by the Lapps, who came down in the winter with their reindeer, pitched their skin tents on the ice of the Neva and took children for rides in their reindeer sleighs. But in the daily life of the capital the northern regions play a comparatively small part. With the Olonets government connection is maintained in the summer by steamers which ply along the rivers, lakes and canals, and in the winter almost entirely by sleigh. A recently-constructed railway line, which follows a lonely trail across Northern Russia to the Ural iron region and farther on into Western Siberia where it joins the Trans-Siberian line, passes through Vologda and Viatka and Perm, and from Vologda a line leads due north to Archangel. Yet Archangel is less distant from Moscow by rail than it is from St. Petersburg. Peasants from the northern governments come to St. Petersburg to work, but their presence is barely noticeable. They are lost in the general mass. The actual importance of the northern governments to the capital is, indeed, very slight. They possess rich natural resources. The Archangel and Vologda governments are covered with dense forests, and in Vologda there are said to be rich oil deposits. But these resources have as yet been barely utilised. The importance of the shores of the White Sea and of the White Sea fisheries is only now coming home to the residents of the capital, and it is only very recently that Russian sovereignty over the island of Novaia Zemlia has been effectively asserted for economic purposes. The northern governments are still used as a region of exile for political offenders, at a time when even Siberia has lost its terrors. They are still to a large extent waste lands. And here, again, the St. Petersburg principle of sketching out a big plan, leaving it to time to fill in the details, is clearly manifested. It is an imperialistic attitude, the very reverse of that of tiny States which diligently cultivate every acre and make their whole land a garden.

To realise how far St. Petersburg represents a sum of

distances one has only to walk up the Nevsky Prospect, the chief thoroughfare of the city. Several churches face the Nevsky. In Eastern Europe religion is almost synonymous with nationality. The various churches stand for various forms of culture. And the churches on the Nevsky stand for most of the chief forms of Christian culture represented in the Empire. There is a Dutch Reformed Church, for instance, near the Moika Canal, which now stands rather as a monument to the past than as a place of worship for the little Dutch colony now in St. Petersburg. It recalls the days when the founder of the city worked in the shipyards of Saardam and Amsterdam, when the Dutch were still powerful on the seas. Dutch artisans were brought to St. Petersburg. Dutch shipping terms were adopted by the Russians, and the very name familiarly applied to the capital by the people is Pieter, the Dutch form of the Emperor's name. The days of transitory Dutch ascendancy are long since past, and the church near the Moika stands as their sober and worthy monument.

Higher up the Nevsky is the German Lutheran Church of St. Peter and Paul which represents a very important element in the make-up of St. Petersburg and in the history of Russian imperialism. Nearly opposite the German Church is the Kazan Cathedral, which symbolises dominant orthodoxy, but not the grey, traditional ecclesiasticism which rules on the Moscow Kremlin. Rather with its eclectic architecture and its Doric colonnades does it represent that modernised Westernised Orthodoxy, that generalised official Orthodoxy which is characteristic of St. Petersburg. At the upper end of the Nevsky stands another important Orthodox centre, the Lavra or Monastery of St. Alexander Nevsky, where the metopolitan has his residence. Standing as it does between the factory district and the commercial part of the city, the Lavra, for all its air of cool seclusion from the world, fails to revive the genuine traditional spirit. In its modern surroundings it is too patently official.

Not far from the Kazan Cathedral and the German Church is the Roman Catholic St. Catherine's Cathedral, before which every Sunday morning stands a dense throng of Poles and Lithuanians. This Cathedral represents the culture of Western and South-western Russia, the Catholicism which Eastern Orthodoxy still regards as its most dangerous rival. Still farther up the Nevsky is an Armenian church representing that form of Christianity which has been in most frequent and intimate contact with the world of Islam; this church may be regarded as typifying the connection between St. Petersburg and the Caucasus in the subjection of which to Russia the Armenians co-operated so ardently. The Georgians have no church on the Nevsky, for they are Orthodox, and in the capital they worship in Russian churches. Just off the Nevsky Prospekt, near the Dutch and German churches, are Finnish and Swedish Lutheran churches. The main thoroughfare of the capital thus presents visible symbols of the principal types of Christian civilisation in European Russia.

Asiatic culture is also represented in St. Petersburg, but not on the Nevsky. On the so-called St. Petersburg side, near the spot where Peter began to build his new capital, a Mohammedan mosque is rising on a site presented by the Emir of Bokhara. The green cupola of the mosque is suggestive of Central Asia, and the building represents the twenty millions of Mohammedan Russian subjects in Eastern Russia, Turkestan, and the steppes to the south of Siberia. In the suburb of Novaia Derevnaia a Lamaist temple has been built, recalling the fact that the eyes of Buriats on the frontiers of Mongolia and Kalmyks in the steppes of the Lower Volga are turned towards St. Petersburg. It is only since the promulgation of the Toleration Edict that it has been possible to build in St. Petersburg the mosque and the temple, these emblems of the extension of the Russian power into the world of Islam and into the Buddhist region. And even so, influential obscurantists were bitter in their opposition:

they professed to be horror-stricken at the erection of a Mohammedan and a pagan place of worship in the capital of a Christian Empire. Yet both mosque and temple are in complete harmony with the imperialistic character of St. Petersburg.

The churches and temples typify the area of power. But the city is the seat of power. It represents centralisation carried to the highest degree. Centralisation means abstraction and generalisation. And this accounts for the coldness and severity of St. Petersburg. It is a city of bold and firm outlines rather than of warm colour and picturesque detail. It is a product of the brain rather than of the heart. It is perfectly flat. Its streets are straight. It contains a minimum of the spontaneous, the unexpected. There is quaintness in the by-ways of St. Petersburg, but it has to be searched for diligently. The capital represents the Empire, but as yet rather by its stern command over the Empire than by the spontaneous movement of manifold parts towards one centre. The building of the mosque and the Buddhist temple suggest what might possibly be, if all the rich resources of the Empire were to seek and to find expression in the capital. If on the site provided by St. Petersburg the great potential energies of European and Asiatic Russia could have full play, if they were completely focussed here the result would be one of extraordinary magnificence. But the time for that has not come. St. Petersburg still suggests the word of command, not organic growth. It is a sketch, an outline, a general statement. It stands for a distant bird's-eye view of an immense area. But the details, the intimacy, the warm, human sympathy that come when in the course of the years material dominance has been transformed into spiritual possession are not yet there. St. Petersburg is still young, just as the Empire is young ; and the capital expresses the youth of the Empire, not in boisterousness, for the effort has been too great for any frolicking, but in a characteristically youthful assertion of the supreme validity of abstractions.

The assertion made by Peter the Great and his successors was so powerful that the forms of life have grown up around it, but this fundamental assertion is still dominant. Catherine and Alexander I in determining the architecture of the capital followed Greek and Roman models. And the sternness, the severity of outline thus attained is entirely in accord with the predominantly abstract character of the city. It expresses the true St. Petersburg. Buildings, especially churches, erected during the nineteenth century in a pseudo-Russian style are out of harmony with the St. Petersburg character. St. Petersburg is far less than itself when, instead of being broadly, powerfully, and imperially Russian, it sinks into a narrow and exclusive nationalism, forgets its native dignity and the manifold responsibilities of Empire, and, aspiring to be another Moscow, chills warm Russian nationalism into something lifeless and oppressive.

St. Petersburg has its own very strongly marked style which aberrations mostly dating from the latter half of the nineteenth century spoil at many points but cannot obscure. This style finds its fullest expression on the Neva quays and in their neighbourhood. The long, dark-red façade of the Winter Palace with its outlook on the Neva, the iron gates and the fine iron railing around the Winter Palace garden—the beauty of St. Petersburg is very suggestive of the beauty of fine iron-work—the Admiralty with its arched entrances and its spire whose graceful upward movement is a relief from the prevailing massivity of the capital, the long sweep of palaces and embassies along the Neva above the Winter Palace, the equestrian statue of Peter the Great in the Senate Square—these constitute the nucleus of the city. On the side of the Winter Palace facing away from the Neva is the Palace Square, a fine open space which, with an admirable sense of fitness, is kept perfectly clear, except for one slender and lofty column in the centre commemorative of the victory over Napoleon in 1812, a column which expresses in its fine self-restraint the very best in the St. Petersburg

spirit. This column is the one architectural feature in St. Petersburg suggestive of clear aspiration. Opposite the Winter Palace in the Palace Square are the Foreign Office and the War Office, the two ministries naturally most closely associated with the Monarch in the maintenance of a sovereignty essentially military in character. The Ministry of Finances is close at hand. An archway which pierces the line of Government offices leads out from this centre of power into the business part of the city. It is in the neighbourhood of the Winter Palace, the Hermitage, the Foreign Office, and that Bridge of Singers that leads over the Moika Canal to the building of the Court Choir that the impression of St. Petersburg is strongest and most intimate. It is an impression of power firmly and consciously grasped. And this impression is strongest when the Palace, the Column, and the Ministries stand alone in the emptiness of the Square. The presence of human masses does not add to it.

But human beings are made very definitely contributory to an impression of power in St. Petersburg. A short street, the Millionnaia, leads from the Winter Palace to a large open space behind the British Embassy called the Field of Mars. This is an oblong area covered with sand in which the sense of spaciousness is increased by the fact that only on one side is there an uninterrupted row of buildings. The field is the review ground for the troops of St. Petersburg, for the capital is strongly garrisoned and the Guards are naturally stationed here. Barracks occupy a considerable portion of the city area; traffic is frequently checked by the marching of troops, and officers of all ranks and privates are the most conspicuous figures in the city throng. The strangest thing of all is to see the Don or Kuban Cossacks riding through the streets of the capital—dark, handsome fellows, bearded—they are the only troops who wear beards—well mounted, they make a very effective picture as they ride slowly, holding aloft their long, glittering pikes. It is an irony of fate that the Cossacks have now come to

symbolise stern repression. A German writer once wrote a pamphlet entitled, "Is Europe going to be Cossackised?" meaning, Is the whole of Europe to be dragooned into submission to Russian absolutism? But the question might very well have another sense. The Cossacks at one time represented the anarchical element in the Russian State. They were freebooters who had escaped into the regions beyond from the tyranny of the central Muscovite power. And the German writer's question might very well have been, Will Russian anarchical principles permeate Western Europe? What has been the effect of the Russian revolution, for instance, in promoting such movements as syndicalism in France and militant suffragism in England? But the Russian Government has long since found a military use for the Cossacks, and what they signify in St. Petersburg now is the very reverse of anarchy. They signify the predominance of the military over the civil element in the State. The reviews formerly held annually in the Field of Mars—they have not been held since the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war—were one of the ways of expressing the splendour of military power. For St. Petersburg is the capital of an Empire that has nearly 30,000 miles of frontier to defend, exclusive of that long, imperfectly explored northern frontier that is defended by snow and ice. The capital in which such military power finds concentrated expression is naturally stern and even oppressive.

But St. Petersburg is not all militarism. It is not merely a garrison, an iron hand, a cold word of command. Near the Field of Mars there is a Summer Garden, the chief park in the city, which adds a touch of lightness. And then the brilliance of power is displayed in the capital. The aristocracy is here, naturally attracted by the Court, and the Quays, the Millionnaia, Gagarinskaia, and Sergeievskaia streets constitute the fashionable quarter of the city. St. Petersburg and not Moscow is the centre of fashionable life. Only at present its brilliance is dimmed. The crisis through

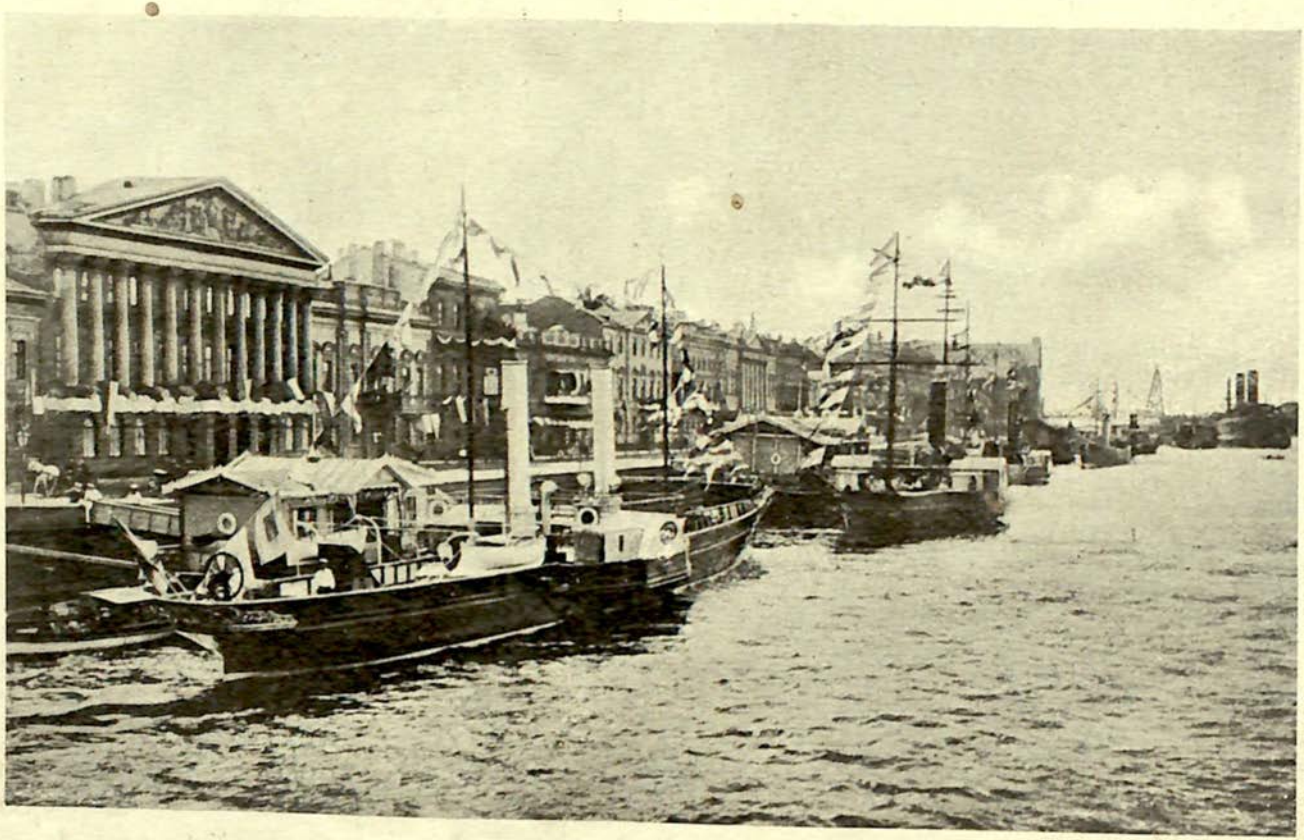
which the Empire is passing finds its perpetual reflection in the life of the capital. The Court has not been in residence in St. Petersburg since the beginning of the revolution, that is, since January, 1905. The Court festivities, without which a St. Petersburg season was at one time inconceivable, have been abandoned. The Imperial Family only visits the Winter Palace on rare occasions, such as the tercentenary of the House of the Romanovs. Fashionable society is deprived of its centre and its tension is relaxed. It follows its routine. There are theatres, balls, visits, tennis, and skating. Roller-skating has been a favourite form of amusement during recent years. But if fashionable life in a capital is an ordered expression of the delight of the governing classes in the possession of power, it is just this delight that is lacking at present in St. Petersburg.

The Neva.

It is a relief to pass from overshadowing government buildings and all the solemn and stately symbols of power to the Neva. Without the Neva the city would be stiff and sombre, petrified in the consciousness of power. The Neva gives life and light and motion. Just above the city it takes a sudden bend and then its main stream flows out broad and majestic to the sea, sending off branches to the north-west and so forming islands on which part of the city and the suburbs are built. On the Neva the palaces, the St. Isaac's Cathedral, the Bourse, and the Academies all gain the necessary perspective and relief. The river brings down a tremendous volume of water from that inland sea, Lake Ladoga, to the Baltic, and brings it down in a swift current. This swiftly-flowing mass of water and that fine expanse of sky which the river keeps clear right in the centre of the city have a liberating effect. They make distance sensible, real, and visible. The current is motion amidst immobility, a perpetual and living reminder of connections and relationships, of possible comings and goings, of the spontaneity in things that is so easily forgotten in the streets beyond the quays. Glorious sunsets

are to be seen across the Neva, and the river broadening out below the quays leads into Western skies and the eager progress of the Western world. The river is incessant motion and stately impetus. And never is the feeling of liberation so strong as when the ice comes down in the spring. Gaps in the ice widen, the ice surfaces break and crumble, lose their brilliant white, become heaped-up clumps of dirty grey, and when at last their hold is loosed and the stream at last gains power, the tumbled mass yields to the mighty constraint and changes its immobility for movement, at first slow and uncertain, and then as it breaks up into floes and the floes collide and break and melt and the ice under the banks is loosened, the dark waters of the river appear at last after the long oblivion of the winter, and crags and patches and whirling blocks are borne down in the triumphant sweep of the current to be lost in the sea. And in the early days of spring the Neva, just freed from the ice, is majestic and powerful as at no other time of the year.

The Neva is all motion. But for all its vitality and volume it is almost motion in the abstract. There is little traffic on it in the region of the city. The port is at the mouth of the river and probably many residents have never seen it. Smaller coastal vessels, the steamers that ply to Reval, Riga, and Libau, to Helsingfors and Stockholm, berth under the Nicholas Bridge, the last of the bridges down stream. But higher up there are only the darting ferry-boats and the few steamers that maintain the Ladoga and Onega service and barges from the interior, though the barges mostly prefer the branches of the river and the canals, and rarely appear in large numbers in the main stream. The busy movement of human traffic is lacking, and the impression of pure motion given by the river is not diffused amongst the endless minutiae of human activities. It remains an impression of great possibilities, of latent power, of large scope for development. It reinforces by its vivid suggestiveness that sense of abstractness which dominates in the city.



THE ENGLISH QUAY, ST. PETERSBURG

In winter the motion disappears. The Neva becomes an expanse of ice. Only the sense of space remains. And this sense of space, exhilarating in summer because of the endless rushing of the stream, becomes brooding in the winter. It is still suggestive, it still holds power in its depths, but it is not power unfolding from within, developing from its own resources, but power stationary, power enthroned and waiting.

The Neva is beautiful in summer and very beautiful in winter. And in the winter the human element enters more closely into its beauty, the city becomes a worthier setting. It is a delight to look down the Neva on a winter night from the Liteiny Bridge—the broad, gleaming whiteness of the river under a starlit sky, the long line of lights on the quays throwing into relief the dark outline of embassies and palaces, the span of the lower bridge with gliding, lighted tramcars —on such evenings St. Petersburg loses its cold self-assertiveness and gains the true protecting quality of a great city.

Seats of Learning.

On the opposite side of the Neva from the Winter Palace stand the seats of learning. The situation is indicative of deliberate choice, power on one side of the river, learning and the arts on the other, and commerce, too, for the Bourse is there; the idea is an expression of Peter's and Catherine's sense of magnificence. The learned institutions stand on an island, Vasilievsky Ostrov, or Basil Island, lying between the main stream of the Neva and one of its branches. Here are the Academy of Sciences, the University, and the Academy of Arts. None of these buildings, except the Academy of Arts, are distinguished by architectural beauty, but they represent a very characteristic side of the life of the capital. St. Petersburg is the gateway by which the arts and sciences of the West entered Russia, and the city has been the scene of a curious interpenetration of political power and civilisation. The interpenetration has frequently taken the form of conflict. There has been frequent hostility between the

two banks of the river. But there has been a constant process of modernisation of political power. The bureaucracy avails itself of the development of science to increase its own efficiency. There is an excellent Military Academy in St. Petersburg, in which officers pass through a severe and extensive course of instruction. Many of the students of the Academy are keenly intelligent and very versatile, and in the tramcars they may be seen reading not only text-books of tactics or strategy, but works on literary criticism and philosophy. Not a few Russian officers have made valuable contributions to science.

The Vasilievsky Ostrov is, then, the centre of enlightenment and progress in St. Petersburg. But the shadow that seems so essential an element in the life of the capital lies heavily here, because the University, with its scores of professors and thousands of students, has been a perpetual battle-ground between the forces of progress and the forces of reaction. The University is a big, red, barrack-like building with no pretention to elegance either inside or out. Within, bare lecture-rooms with desks and blackboards, laboratories, professors' rooms; outside, a desolate courtyard. There is nothing home-like, nothing to suggest corporate life. Yet there are over ten thousand students in the University, and their number is constantly increasing. These students come from all parts of the Empire, drawn by the strange magnetism of the capital. Most of them are poor, they rent cheap rooms, eat unappetising dinners, support themselves, or eke out their scanty resources by coaching backward schoolboys. They attend lectures diligently or slackly, as the case may be—at the present time students go to lectures very half-heartedly,—cram feverishly for the compulsory examinations every spring, and occasionally form reading-clubs or debating societies. Some pursue learning with interest and zest in spite of all difficulties. Many are indifferent and amuse themselves as they have means and inclination. The professors, too, are out of heart. There is no real corporate

life in the University, and the uniformed students who flock thither in thousands find themselves homeless.

The explanation of this melancholy state of affairs is simple. Before 1905 the Universities were full of the revolutionary spirit, and the majority of the students were actively or passively on the side of the revolutionary movement. In 1905 the Universities were freed from immediate government control, and were made autonomous under the administration of the professorial staff. When the revolutionary excitement died down the students lost interest in politics and turned with extraordinary enthusiasm to their University work. There was a sudden and real revival of learning in Russia. New sympathy and mutual understanding grew up between students and professors. All kinds of societies and clubs for special studies sprang up. The professors were delighted. Never had they met with such an eager response from the students, and they were stimulated to new efforts. But the political reaction reached the Universities. The Ministry of Public Instruction sought to regain its former immediate control and set to work step by step to destroy the autonomy granted in 1905. In the early stages of the process the students protested. At a moment when they had found an unexpected fascination in learning they were compelled to turn their attention to politics. They protested in their own way. They struck, that is, they refused to attend lectures, and they also made street demonstrations. The police dispersed the demonstrations and entering the University buildings arrested those who tried to maintain the strike by throwing about ill-smelling chemicals, and also those who took part in meetings of protest, and a large number of youths who were mere lookers on. Many of these were imprisoned for several months or exiled to the northern governments. The attempts of the professors to combat the restrictive measures led to the dismissal or removal of many leading scholars, and this was especially the case in Moscow, where the ablest and most popular men in all the

faculties were compelled to retire. The result of this policy is that the University has been reduced to the position of an aggregate of halls for lectures and examination purposes. It has no collective life. The students enrolled on its lists receive instruction, but they are not subjected to the educative influences proper to a University. Each drifts his own way; there is little possibility of grouping; the weaker ones fail; the bolder and more brazen come to the front; there is a general lowering of tone and temper, a distaste for the University that is only overcome by the necessity of passing examinations as a condition of entering the professions.

The University consists of a Historico-Philological or Arts Faculty, a Legal, Natural Science, Physics and Mathematics and Oriental Faculties. The Legal Faculty attracts the largest number of students because it opens the way to the Bar and to various kinds of Government service; formerly it owed its popularity largely to the fact that it provides courses in political economy and sociology which seemed to the students specially interesting because of their bearing on Socialism. The other faculties train teachers besides a small percentage of professors and scholars. The great proportion of students in the Oriental Faculty have the diplomatic service in view, though here, too, there are a certain number who pursue Oriental studies for their own sake. The University is well equipped, possesses many distinguished professors, and in spite of all the conflicts of recent years, it retains a tradition of scholarship which under favourable circumstances may again be richly developed.

But the University is only one of the many higher educational institutions in St. Petersburg. Students form in the city a category almost as prominent as those of military men, officials and tradesmen. There is no medical faculty in the University, but there is a Military Medical Academy which, until recently, was very liberal in its provision for students who did not intend becoming army surgeons. These

provisions have been altered, the students have been subjected to a stricter military discipline and made to wear a uniform resembling that of officers. Some of the highest medical authorities in Russia are professors at the Academy, which is splendidly equipped out of the funds of the War Office. There is a great variety of higher Technical Schools, The Technological Institute, The Institute of Civil Engineers, The Institute of the Ways of Communication (corresponding to the French Ponts et Chaussees), The Mining Institute, an' Electro-Technical Institute, Agricultural Institutes, and many others. The Polytechnical Institute, which is situated in the suburb of Lesnoi, was founded by Count Witte during his term of office as Minister of Finances. It is a new type of educational institution giving a training in various kinds of engineering and in economics, providing, in fact, a general insight into the economic and technical side of modern civilisation. The course of instruction is astonishing in its scope, the Institute is magnificently housed and equipped, and is American rather than European in the breadth of its aims.

In the Academy of Arts students of painting, architecture, and sculpture wage hot disputes over futurism and the Italian masters. The Conservatoire now has a solidly-based reputation as a Musical Academy and gains dignity and importance even from those triumphs of Russian music which are associated with a revolt against its scholastic tendencies.

The higher education of women is well provided for in St. Petersburg, for it was here in the 'sixties and the 'seventies that the battle for the education of women was fought and won. Women were admitted to the University during a brief period after 1905, and several women completed their University course with great success. But in 1908 the Government barred the entrance to female students, and they were again obliged to have recourse to the institutions provided especially for them. The chief of these is the Women's University College on the Vasilievsky Ostrov, which was founded in

1878 by a private association with a capital of £25, but attracted such general interest and support that in a few years a suitable building was erected and provision was made for a large number of students. There are now about 6,000 students in the college, and they are distributed between Historico-Philological or Arts, Physics and Mathematics, and Legal Faculties. Many of the University professors lecture there, and there are several women professors, instructors, and laboratory assistants, most of whom are former students of the College. "Higher Courses of Lectures for Women" is the literal translation of the Russian title of the institution, and the students are commonly known as *kursistky* or "coursists." "Students and *kursistky*," or still more shortly *molodiozh*, or "the youth," are the general names for that mass of young, ardent, restless and perplexed humanity which counts for so much in St. Petersburg. Eager impulse on the one hand, and on the other the heavy weight of indiscriminating authority—that is the sad contradiction in the life of the capital which so far remains unsolved.

There is a special Medical Institute for Women which was founded in 1872 and sent a batch of women doctors to the Russo-Turkish War. There is also a Polytechnical College for Women, which among other interesting work performs the astonishing feat of training women engineers who build bridges and have worked on the construction of railways. There are a great many private colleges for women which impose less severe conditions of admission than the University College on the Vasilievsky Ostrov, which alone has a University reputation. The amount of energy and sacrifice represented by the Women's Colleges and Institutes is enormous, for they have all been founded and are all supported by means of voluntary contributions. They have shared in the troubles of the University and the other men's colleges, and the students have protested and struck, and been arrested and exiled. They have many defects which mostly arise from the lack of facilities for proper organisation. But they are

doing valuable work in training up a type of intelligent and independent women. It is curious that while women students are greatly interested in general questions and flock to public lectures on literature and philosophy, they do not seem to be particularly interested in a specifically women's question, and, on the whole, are indifferent to the suffragist movement.

A few years ago there was founded in St. Petersburg, mainly through the exertion of the alienist, Professor Bekhterev, a so-called Psychoneurological Institute. The chief aim of this institute is to give special facilities for the study of mental diseases, but it also serves the purposes of a kind of lower grade University. Lectures are given frequently by University professors on a variety of University subjects, literary, legal, philosophical, historical and economic, but the conditions of entrance to the institute permit many to become students who have not attained the University standard. Here are to be found a great many country school teachers in quest of higher education, Tartars, Armenians and Georgians, who have had no opportunity of completing a secondary school course, and Jews who have been prevented from entering the University by the provision that not more than a certain very limited percentage of Jews may be enrolled as students every year. Formerly the Psychoneurological Institute was situated on the Nevsky, and its students, men and women, were easily distinguishable in the throng by a certain nervous restlessness of manner. Now a large building has been erected for the Institute on the outskirts of the city. The Psychoneurological students form a transitional stage between the regular students of the University and Higher Technical Schools, and the hundreds who attend Commercial, Language, Feldsher, and other elementary medical courses. The number of young people who are studying something or other in St. Petersburg must be well over 50,000, exclusive of the pupils of primary and secondary schools. The mere association of the word " courses " with

St. Petersburg seems to have a fascination for provincial boys and girls. Unscrupulous adventurers take advantage of this, advertise courses of lectures on all imaginable subjects on special terms and attract the ill-prepared, the unwary, and the poor.

The students come from all parts of Russia, are of various nationalities and of very varied habits, tastes and upbringing. Subjected for a few years to the influences of the imperial city they acquire a certain common stamp. Professors notice that students from the provinces, even if they do not work very hard, display at the examinations in their third or fourth year a much higher level of intelligence than in their first year, simply because their wits are sharpened by city life. Yet the opportunities for development are far fewer than they might be considering the numbers of the students and the resources of the city. The abstract character of St. Petersburg asserts itself here in a curious way. The students are all learning something, some for practical purposes, some for the sheer love of learning, but they are all setting inquiring minds to work so as to secure some grasp on the trying problem of life. But the mere fact of their presence in St. Petersburg in such numbers supplies obvious means for solving the problem practically, by sheer manifold living, book-learning being assimilated in a generous exchange of experience amidst all the wealth of opportunity that life in a capital affords. But the natural and organic development of student life is constantly checked by restrictive measures. The students are held to their book-learning, their minds are fed on abstractions, they are artificially held aloof from the normal process of life that creates its own forms and builds strong characters. It is no wonder that students in this position become absorbed in abstract politics, or when bitter experience has shown the futility of politics, are oppressed by the sheer emptiness of life, grow reckless, live morally and materially from hand to mouth, and in large numbers find refuge in suicide. There is nothing sadder

in the life of St. Petersburg now than the daily record of suicides with its constant reminder of the bitter despair of the youth or girl who came from the provinces to the capital with golden hopes.

Quite apart from the other educational institutions stand the schools of the privileged classes, the Lyceum, the School of Jurisprudence, and the Corps of Pages, as well as the various schools for the training of officers. The two former institutions represent the closest parallel that Russia possesses to English public schools, only that the higher classes of the Lyceum and the School of Jurisprudence have a University character, and the completion of a course in these schools gives a rank in public service equivalent to that secured by the completion of a University course. They are boarding-schools with resident masters, and a conventional system of discipline in which English public school ideas are modified by the habits of wealthy Russian families.

The secondary boarding-schools for the daughters of the privileged classes are called Institutes, and are under the immediate patronage of the Imperial Family. In the Institutes great attention is paid to language and deportment, and the neat, well-mannered boy or girl of the privileged schools is a very different being from the rougher but far more frankly human pupils of the common schools outside. There are numbers of general secondary schools in St. Petersburg, both government and private schools. There are first of all the *gimnazii* or gymnasiums, dreary schools with a hard, dull routine lasting through the seven or eight classes up which boys or girls have to fight their thorny way. The *gimnazii* are fairly cheap—the fees amount to about ten pounds a year—but they are painfully lacking in humanising and vitalising influences; the abstract character of St. Petersburg is represented here in a very cold and bare form. The "real" and "commercial" schools emphasise modern as opposed to classical subjects. Attached to the German churches are German schools, which are frequently attended

by Russian children whose parents consider the German educative methods superior to the Russian. But there are a number of excellent private Russian secondary schools in which reformed methods are applied. Some of these schools are of long standing; others were founded during the revolutionary period when some of the best teachers left the State secondary schools for political reasons. In these schools the principle of displaying complete confidence in the pupils—of trusting in their sense of honour, making lessons not needless tasks, but means of arousing the pupil's interest in the subject, and stimulating inquiry—is carried out logically, and great attention is paid to what is called "general development," or all-round culture, including political science and philosophy. These newer schools are certainly superior to the State *gimnazii*, but it is difficult as yet to form an exact estimate of the value of their work. Most are still on the experimental stage. Some seem to encourage in their pupils a tendency to premature generalisation. But there is no doubt as to their awakening an interest in ideas and transmitting in a very pure form the humane tradition of the best Russian literature. One defect they share with the State schools in St. Petersburg, and that is, the lack of provision for the needs of the growing body. In some schools light and ventilation are better, in others they are worse. But all are situated in city streets; the only playground is a narrow courtyard surrounded by high walls. There is little opportunity or encouragement for sport. Some of the schools try to remedy this state of affairs by arranging week-end excursions beyond the city during the winter, and longer excursions during the summer. One private school in Tsarskoe Selo, which is conducted on English lines, gives the first place to physical training and to the hardening of the body. But the ordinary St. Petersburg high-school boy or girl spends the winter day in school in a round of lessons rarely interrupted by games, then comes home in the dusk of the afternoon and spends the evening hours in preparing endless

home lessons. In spring there is the fierce rush of examinations, the agonised dread of bad marks for idleness or as the mark of a teacher's spite, the reproaches of parents when a backward boy is sentenced to re-examination in the autumn. Then from June till the end of August rest in the *dacha* or in the country, for those whose parents have the means, while the poorer boys and girls drag through the summer months in the hot, dusty streets of the city. From September till June spending the days between school and flat, flat and school, without gardens or open spaces, with only sporadic beginnings of hockey and football on the outskirts of the city during recent years—no wonder the children of St. Petersburg look pale and anaemic and are tamed down to that submission to abstractions, that lack of great zest in living which is characteristic of the bureaucratic capital.

There are municipal primary schools, there are night-schools and kindergartens in the working-men's districts; there is a University Extension Society which provides every winter a great variety of popular lectures by prominent professors and has recently built a big People's Palace of its own. There is an army of tutors and governesses of all kinds. Surely never was city so bent on the pursuit of knowledge as St. Petersburg is. In this respect it is a true capital of the Russian people, the people of the alert, restless, inquiring mind that refuses to be put off with partial explanations, that is always searching for new aspects of truth. It is this eager spirit of inquiry that freshens the atmosphere of the city. Yet this strange capital somehow deliberately and persistently prevents knowledge from acquiring flesh and blood, from passing the test of real life, and holds it in the sphere of ghostly abstractions.

St. Petersburg has not only its schools, but its learned societies and repositories of learning. There are the Museums, the Zoological Museum with its skeletons of a mammoth, an antediluvian rhinoceros, a megatherium and other extinct monsters, the Ethnographical Museum of the Academy of

Sciences with valuable collections, particularly from the Far East and Siberia, the new Ethnographical Department of the Alexander III Museum which has not yet been opened to the public, but contains a wealth of material illustrative of the customs and religions of Russia and the neighbouring Asiatic lands. The Imperial Public Library and the library of the Academy of Sciences contain a large quantity of rare manuscripts, more particularly of Oriental works, and the number is constantly being increased by acquisitions from Central Asia and Mongolia. The Imperial Geographical Society, which now has a pretty stone building of its own near the Moika Canal, reaps the scientific fruits of Russia's expansion, equips explorers, and promotes by its publications discussions, and reports and by the work of its provincial branches the study of the ethnography, the statistical conditions and the physical geography of the Empire. The Imperial Archaeological Society studies the antiquities of the plain and its Oriental department forms the nearest Russian counterpart to the Royal Asiatic Society. At the head of the learned institutions of the Empire, bringing all their varied activities to a focus stands the Academy of Sciences, membership in the sections of which—there are sections of physics and mathematics, the Russian language, history and philology—is a reward for distinguished scholarship, while membership in the section of belles-lettres is a tribute to literary merit. The Academy, which has in the person of M. Sergius Oldenburg, an energetic, scholarly, and versatile secretary, is a centre of scientific organisation, and Slavonic and Oriental studies and the natural sciences receive abundant encouragement there. In its Journals and Memoirs are recorded the chief results of Russian scientific effort. In connection with the Academy a Lomonosov Institute, named after the pioneer of modern Russian literature and learning, is being established with a view to the promotion of independent scientific investigation.

All the currents of St. Petersburg life mingle on the clear

sweep of the Nevsky Prospekt between the Nicholas Railway Station and the Admiralty. Peter's idea of cutting through the forests on the left bank of the Neva some straight avenues called " prospects," or " perspectives," has received a brilliant justification in the Nevsky. There is something tense and exhilarating in the very straightness of this fine, broad thoroughfare, something that tempts the adventurous though heavily-padded coachman to drive his splendid horses at headlong speed, scattering humble cabmen before him. The electric tramcars which have come in of recent years have added a pretty touch of scarlet to the street scene, but they have put a check on that furious driving which the mere sight of the Nevsky used to stimulate. Taxis are running, too, and crowding out the bearded and be-kaftaned peasant cabmen or izvozchiks, and altogether the Nevsky is far busier than it used to be and has lost some of its old picturesqueness. But the charm of its main outline remains. The Nevsky is a business street, but it contains no very fine shops—in fact, there are no stores in St. Petersburg that make a great display; rich wares are bought and sold in hundreds of shops of moderate size and the Morskaia is the only street where trade assumes a certain splendour. There are three dark red palaces on the Nevsky, the churches and the Public Library, the Imperial Theatre and a garden, and a number of banks, some of which have recently adorned the Nevsky by erecting new stone buildings. There is no sense of crowding, of fierce competition that suffers no elbow room. The serenity of the capital dominates over the rush of business.

The Nevsky.

But all ways lead through the Nevsky, and its traffic is an epitome of the city's life. Chinovniks in plain clothes or in uniform going to and from government offices, students and kursistky on their way to Vasilievsky Ostrov, women making interminable afternoon purchases in the Gostinny Dvor, merchants from the provinces, contractors and

commission agents who lodge in dreary, musty furnished rooms at the upper end of the thoroughfare, the *jeunesse dorée* of the city parading the latest modes, business men, workmen, officers, journalists, actors, idlers, beggars, sightseers from the provinces and abroad—all flow up and down the Nevsky in one steady stream, some stopping to bargain at street-corners with cabmen, some alighting from closed carriages or motor-cars, some waiting in groups for tramcar number 4, 5, or 13. On Sundays and holidays the crowd on the Nevsky is paler and less prosperous-looking, for it is then that hard-worked shop-assistants and dressmakers and poorly-paid clerks come out to enjoy that soothing, leisurely sense of spaciousness that the thoroughfare affords.

After all, though commerce and industry are thrust into the background, the great bulk of the population of the city earn their living in shop, office, or factory. The Gostinny Dvor marks the beginning of a large business area full of small shops with big businesses and markets. The traffic in the streets outside the Nevsky is frequently interrupted by processions of heavy drays laden with every description of goods, and there are far more of these drays in the streets than there would be if the big railway stations at various points on the fringe of the city were connected by something in the nature of a circular line. The Haymarket, which is also a provision market, lies on the Sadovaia beyond the Public Library. The Corn Exchange, which is the centre of another commercial area, lies beyond the Nicholas Railway Station. But although so much and such varied business is done in St. Petersburg, trade has no pride, no self-confidence even. It is modest, a little timorous, and undistinguished. The habit of dependence on the Government, of subordinating commercial initiative to the will of officials and departments is particularly strong here in the capital. The claim for shorter working hours which the shop-assistants successfully maintained during a brief period after the

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ST. PETERSBURG—THE NEVSKY PROSPECT

revolution was a break in the routine of submission. And that most of those engaged in business are dissatisfied with the present state of affairs is shown by the fact that in the elections to the Duma St. Petersburg has invariably returned Opposition candidates.

Indeed it is only during the last few years that St. Petersburg has begun to show something like civic spirit. A prominent building on the Nevsky is that of the City Duma or the City Council. This building has a shabby, neglected look, and its appearance is typical of the state of the administration of the city. No big European capital is so badly managed as St. Petersburg is. The city has a Governor or Prefect, called the Gradonachalnik, who is the Chief of Police and is responsible for the maintenance of order. But the administration of economic affairs is in the hands of an elective council. Under the Municipal Law the chief electoral power is in the hands of the wealthier property-owners, and for very many years the big house and property-owners in St. Petersburg, who are mostly well-to-do merchants or retired officials, formed in the Council a close and powerful coterie and managed the affairs of the city in their own interests. The privileged position of this coterie added to the constant intersection of the competency of the Council by that of the Gradonachalnik and the Government fostered corruption and checked development. The central area of the city is outwardly spick and span. But there is no proper drainage system. The water-supply is such that cholera never misses St. Petersburg in its periodical visitations to Europe. St. Petersburg did not secure an electric tramway service until 1908, and was one of the last cities in the Empire to do so, the house-owners fearing that electric trams would mean an exodus to the suburbs and a lowering of rents. The cobble pavements of many of the streets on the outskirts of the city are so full of holes that it is not wholly safe to drive over them. All imaginable defects of city government are, in

Growth in Civic Spirit.

fact, well represented in St. Petersburg. After 1906 the population of the city grew restive under the misgovernment of the Council, the last cholera epidemic intensified the general discontent, and during recent elections the party of reforms has succeeded, in spite of the inequalities of the franchise, in securing a majority which includes a number of professional men and deputies and former deputies of the Imperial Duma. This new majority has pledged itself to effect a thorough renovation of the city. The changes in the City Council, the growing divergency between the burgesses and the governing classes, the increasing manifestations of individual taste in the architecture of private houses, the feverish building activity that has marked recent years, the general rise in the standard of comfort, indicate a growing determination to escape from the cold abstractions and generalisations that have hitherto formed the staple of life in St. Petersburg, and to live a full, many-coloured, many-sided city life.

The outline is being gradually filled in. The thousands who have hitherto seemed as mere human material for writing " St. Petersburg " in big, bold letters are ceasing to be a mere indiscriminate mass. Most of the working people of the city are of peasant origin. Year by year they come to St. Petersburg from Riazan, Orel, Kaluga, Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Tver, Novgorod, Viatka, Perm, Vologda, Archangel, come with their bundles in the third-class carriages of the slow trains, or else trudging on foot, in top boots or in bast shoes. Many find work as factory-workers, as cabmen, as Swiss or concierges, as dvorniks or house-yard servants, as messengers, floor-polishers, stonemasons, carriers or draymen, while many of the women become domestic servants. They live poorly at the best in dark, tiny flats in the back-yards of big houses, or in tumble-down wooden houses on the outskirts of the city; at the worst in " corners," paying for the corner of a room from a rouble and a half to two roubles (three to four shillings a month), and living on herring,

black bread, and tea, with various additions proportioned to their earnings. To a large extent they maintain their peasant outlook, associate with their zemliaki, their compatriots, people from their own village or government, throng to the churches early on Sunday morning, watch the weather and the passing of the seasons, thinking "now is the time for haymaking, now for harvest," and maintaining the peasant accent, the peasant decorum. Naturally they drink more in the city, and on Sundays and holidays staggering figures are to be met at every turn. The city does its fusing, levelling work upon them; they gather together in traktirs or tea-houses, and over glasses of weak tea slowly exchange and interpret the impressions that now come crowding in the shock of great events, now flow in a steady stream in the regular course of daily labour. They grow accustomed to the cheap amusements of the city. Hundreds are attracted to the Narodny Dom, the People's Palace, with its plays and operas at extraordinarily low prices of admission. In the summer evenings, or on Sundays and holidays, there are *guliania*, "walkings" in the public gardens, which are lamentably few and far between, and in the Petrovsky Park on the Petersburg Side. Here they walk in pairs, eating sunflower seeds, listening to the music of a military band, or else standing watching some melodrama on an open stage. And now there are scores of cheap cinematographs in all parts of the city, with scenes of blood-curdling tragedy, and pictures of all the wonders of the wide world. Cheap newspapers have appeared and cheap books, and there are night-schools and popular lectures, and the children go to school and grow up to be true city folk, and all kinds of new ideas spread swiftly amidst this busy, moving, alert, and endlessly communicative mass. Now they are carried away by the preaching of Father John of Kronstadt. Then comes the political upheaval with all its perplexing problems and wild hopes and bitter disappointments. Lay brothers come preaching temperance, and move hundreds to shake off

their slackness and live a cleanly life. A wave of pessimism passes through the mass, and the police records daily tell of suicides of working people—a workman jumps into a canal, a woman drinks acetic acid. It is a swift transformation of the neighbourliness of village life into a big city neighbourliness, confused, uncertain of itself, with many relapses into vice and much groping after goodness, with an inevitable urban vulgarisation and debasement of feeling, but at the same time with a sharpening of the intelligence to eager inquiry that is sometimes raised in a volume of collective emotion to the point of passionate moral questioning.

The great majority of the working people in the city—over 200,000 men and women—are employed in the factories —the cotton-mills, shipbuilding, machine and iron works, the cloth factories, boot factories, cigarette factories, that stand on the outskirts of the city, beyond the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, beyond the Narva gate, near the Finland Station, and along the banks of the Neva above the city. Among the working people the factory operatives are the pioneers of new ideas. They are peasants who have been caught in the whirl of the industrial process and are going through the inevitable mental evolution. But in their case the revolution has not merely taken the form of a gradual economic struggle. Ten years ago they were still simple peasants in their general outlook on life, with a vague longing for truth and justice. Then they were thrown into the forefront of the political conflict. A priest organised them in working-men's clubs, and then set them marching to the Winter Palace to ask for justice. Since that terrible Sunday in 1905 the working people of St. Petersburg have drawn stern knowledge from bitter experience. They have struck again and again, oftener for political than for economic reasons; they have formed trade unions, which after a short period of work were suppressed by the Government. Many of their number have been imprisoned, exiled, or executed. They

have been in constant conflict with soldiers, police, and detectives. They have been at fierce feud among themselves over the merits of various parties and groups, Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries, Majority Social Democrats and Minority Social Democrats. They have turned away from politics in bitterness and disgust, and sunk into indifference or rowdyism, or else have plunged into the study of science and history. The movement in the factories is felt more or less directly by all the working population of the city. The old passivity is disappearing. The people is becoming conscious of itself, of its needs and its own vague aspirations. And for all the cosmopolitanism of city life these aspirations are distinctly Russian.

The capital does its stern, levelling, generalising work, trying to maintain a cold simplicity of outline, to eliminate complex detail, to continue to assert over the Empire a bare and indiscrete conception of power. But Russia is flowing into St. Petersburg, Russian life is constantly welling up in the capital and making the capital its interpreter. This warm feeling of genuinely Russian life underlying apparent hardness reconciles one to the chilliness, the heaviness that often seem inseparable elements in the city atmosphere. One symptom of the advance of national life is the presence of the Duma, which, even though it be hidden away amongst military barracks in a remote corner of the city, is still an Imperial Parliament.

But St. Petersburg, so long as it remains St. Petersburg, can never wholly lose its rigidity, its severity of outline, a certain coldness and aloofness of manner. It is the manner of a city in which are concentrated a great effort and fierce strain. The foundation of the city was the expression of Peter's gigantic attempt to raise the tsardom to the plane of a civilised world-empire. And since his day the Imperial effort has rarely relaxed. The strain of extending the Empire has been concentrated in St. Petersburg; here have been devised the methods of maintaining and administering it.

And now it is St. Petersburg that is bearing the heavy responsibility of leading the Empire through the severest and most profound crisis through which it has yet passed. The city in which is epitomised the struggle and pain of the Russian nation in its vast striving can never be a simply comfortable or cheerful capital. The tension is too perpetual, the historical responsibility too grave.

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